

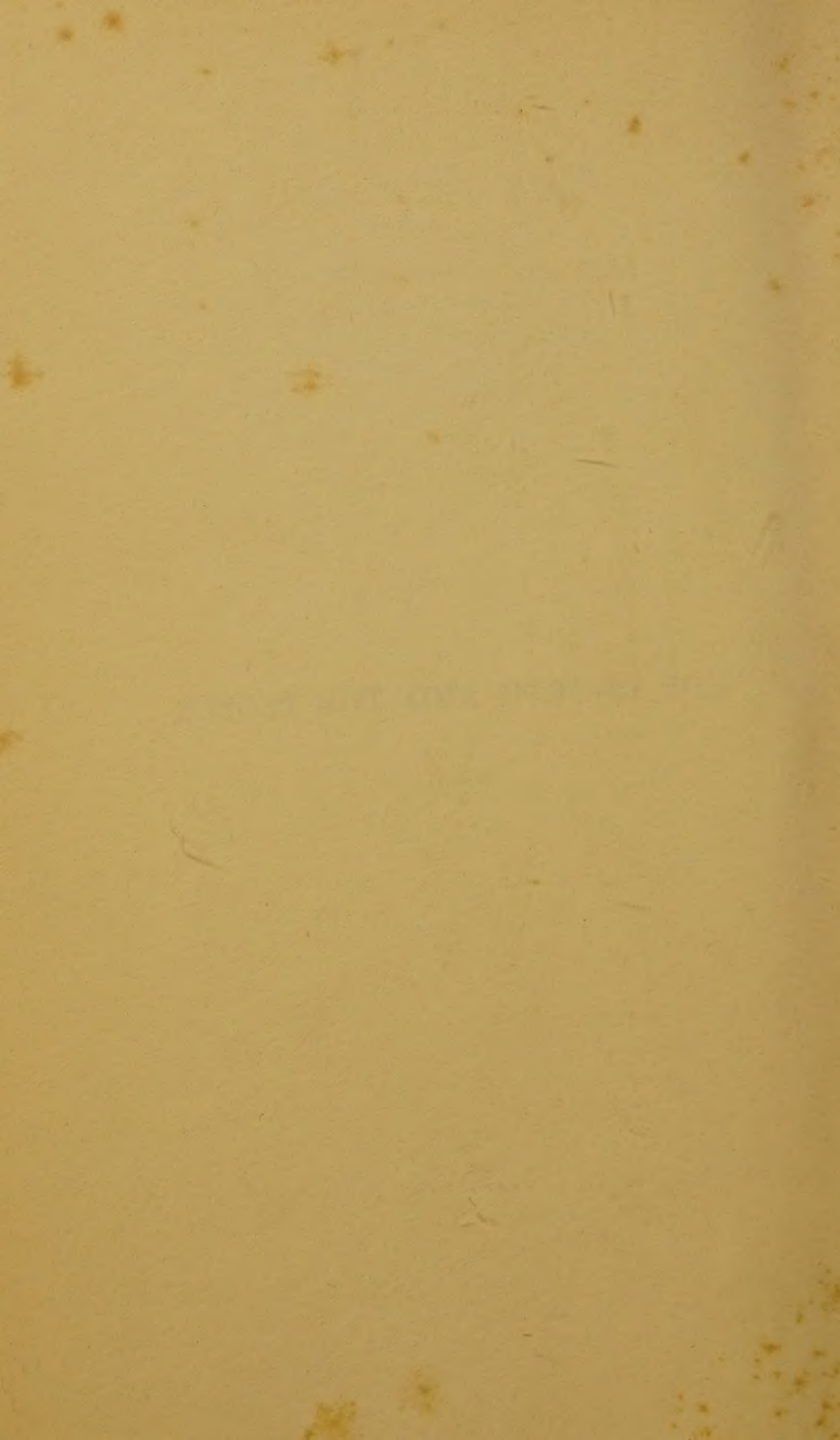
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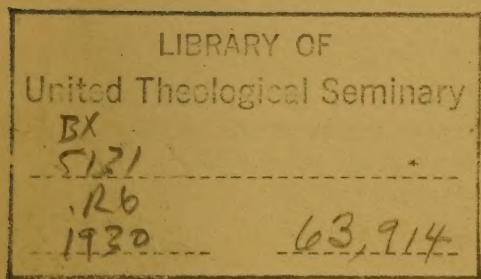
THE CHURCH AND THE PEOPLE



THE CHURCH AND THE PEOPLE

PROBLEMS OF REUNION, SEX AND
MARRIAGE, WOMEN'S MINISTRY
ETC.

BY
CANON T. GUY ROGERS, M.C., B.D.
Rector of Birmingham, Chaplain to the King



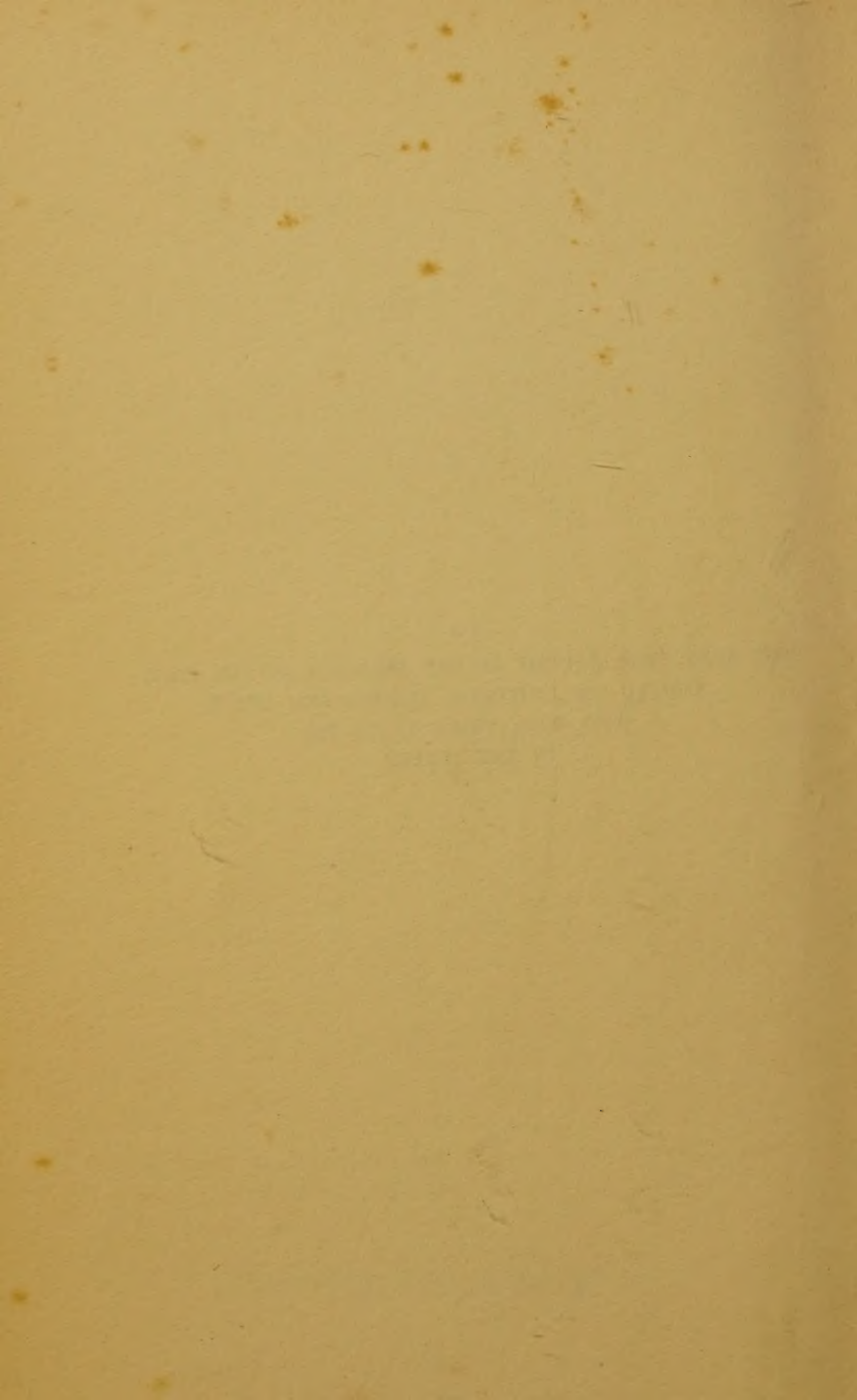
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TO
THE AUNT WHO TAUGHT ME MY RELIGION IN THE PAST,
AND TO MY CHILDREN, MARTIN AND BETTY,
WHO WILL TEACH IT TO ME
IN THE FUTURE



PREFACE

THIS book was begun at St. Cergue, above the lake of Geneva in the middle of August, 1930. The view of the panorama of the Alps from the Jungfrau to the Grand Massif affected all my thinking, and is responsible for the title of the opening chapter: "Far Horizons." No one could take a niggardly view of the Church of Christ in such surroundings. The arrival of the Report of the Lambeth Conference a week later brought mists as well as sunshine across the view. The effect has been duly recorded.

The publisher who urged me to write the book assured me—with a faith which does him credit—that such a book is wanted and that the time is ripe. I make no apology for the speed with which the book has been written, for my candid friends assure me that, whatever merit my writing may (or may not) possess, it is considerably increased when I write under pressure. Certainly I found that when I started there was a great deal I wanted to say, and that the experience of a lifetime spent in the Church was struggling to express itself in one modest volume. This has its disadvantages, but it keeps the writer in touch with reality.

I have been asked whether it is a book for the Clergy or for the Laity. Why these sharp distinctions? The gulf between them is too great already. I have in mind all who want to make the witness of the Church effective in our day and generation. I shall be honoured if those in authority read the book, and abundantly satisfied if it finds its way into the hands of some of those who, kindly yet critical, are to be found on the outer fringe of our Church life.

The two chapters on Popular Preaching and The Common Herd were originally given as part of a course of Pastoral Theology Lectures before the University of Cambridge, and now appear in print for the first time. The view of the Holy Communion, which I suggest for the consideration of a Uniting Church, is largely taken from a paper which I read to a Regional Conference in Birmingham of the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement, and which appeared subsequently in pamphlet form, and was reprinted by request in *St. Martin's Review*.

I have been greatly indebted to my wife for constructive suggestions and devastating criticisms made during the writing of the book, also for continuous help in the treatment of the subjects and the correction of the proofs. Many of the quotations introducing the chapters have been provided by my friend, the Rev. J. P. Hodges, Curate of Birmingham Parish Church. Two Anglo-Catholic friends at St. Cergue, to whom I read some passages of the book, have expressed their views of its future and of my own in a way which looks ominous:

There once was a Birmingham Canon,
Whose theology laymen were mad on;
But the Bishops all shook
When they studied his book,
And unfrocked him with righteous abandon!

I am glad to think, however, that much of what I have written in the chapter on "The Relief of Tension in the Church" met with their approval.

It is time, however, that explanations came to an end and that the book be allowed to speak for itself. The pathetic desire, which asserts itself in so many prefaces, to prejudice the public in favour of a particular book, or to secure a more kindly reception for it than its merits justify must be bravely resisted!

T. GUY ROGERS.

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FAR HORIZONS

God built them a temple upon the earth,
And He laid the foundations thereof in a land of brightness,

And God breathed His Spirit upon the forms of matter
And man arose from the dust of the earth.

And every man in his zeal and after his own imagination
Ran to the temple, and pulled down the precious stones,
And laid its glory into ruins.

And built in every place a house of worship,
And each congregation held sacred the stones of its own house,
And scorned the churches of strangers.

And many fought and were slain because other men had not the same
precious stones for their sanctuary, and for thousands of years they
warred fiercely for this cause.

But at length they humbled their blind pride, and began to see that
all places had some remnant of the Temple of God.

And they began to gather up the fragments from all quarters and to
set them together,

And to discover the plan of the Cathedral of all souls.

And peace and wisdom began to descend upon mankind as they built
their church of humanity.

And it became their house of God for ever, the home of kindness, the
abode of verity.

PART I
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

FAR HORIZONS

“Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.”
Ignatius.

I PROPOSE to deal in this book with current affairs in the Church of England. Like many other people who have found in it their spiritual home, I am deeply concerned in the witness which it can give to the modern world, the offer it can make to those who still believe in institutional religion, and how it is going to develop, or, as some say, to disintegrate in the future. But before I begin to speak about the Church of England as I know it and to plunge *in medias res*, it may be well to say something about the Church of England from a theoretical point of view. I shall try to be brief, for the ground has been covered again and again, and there is no consensus of opinion.

To some the Church of England is substantially the same kind of Church in ethos and tradition as the Church of Rome, a dismembered limb which may some day be regraft on the parent trunk. To others it is nothing more or less than a case of arrested development. It is a Protestant Church created by the great spiritual movement of the Reformation, but checked in its development by the original jealousy of the Crown and by the subsequent counter reformation which appeared within its borders.

There is a third view, often regarded as the typically Anglican view, which sees the Church of England as the Bridge Church, providentially retaining Catholic and Protestant elements and destined to be the pattern of Reunion between Churches of these opposing types. The presentation of the Church of England in this particular light is a favourite theme of Anglican writers of the "Central School." The following quotation from the Bishop of Winchester is characteristic:

"In no other Church in Christendom are the essential elements of Catholicism and Protestantism so adequately combined. The essentials of Catholicism are there: the ancient Creeds, the ancient liturgy, the ancient Orders; the Apostolic Succession—the fact of it, though no particular theory is officially countenanced. The essentials of Protestantism are there: the Bible as the rule of faith; the right of private judgment within reasonable limits; freedom for Christian thought and inquiry; and a personal relationship with God as the core and kernel of religion."¹

Unfortunately, however, this eloquent sketch of the satisfying character of the Catholicity of the Church of England falls on deaf ears as far as the Church of Rome or the Orthodox Church is concerned. The one supreme test for the Church of Rome is obedience to the infallible Spiritual Authority of the Pope. Episcopal Succession in the Apostolical line has long since ceased to be the mark of "Catholicity" for a good Roman. The position has been stated in the encyclical letter of Pius XI on fostering true religious unity:

"There is but one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered, and that is by furthering the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated

¹ Essay on Church of England from *The Reunion of Christendom*.

from it; for from that one true Church they have in the past fallen away. The one Church of Christ is visible to all, and will remain, according to the will of its Author, exactly the same as He instituted it. Furthermore, in this one Church of Christ, no man can be or remain who does not accept, recognise, and obey the authority and supremacy of Peter and his legitimate successors."¹

The Orthodox Church, on the other hand, while it repudiates obedience to one central authority as a mark of Catholicity, exalts the "doctrine" of the Councils of the Undivided Church to an infallible position, and makes their dogmatic definitions the final test. Catholicity lies not in submission to any living person but to an unalterable and unchanging past. Archbishop Germanos insists quite courteously, but firmly, on the importance which his Church attaches to doctrine defined by Conciliar Authority.

As he writes, in a Declaration signed by twenty-two members of the Eastern Church and presented to the Conference on Faith and Orders held at Lausanne, 1924:

"The mind of the Orthodox Church is that reunion can take place only on the basis of the common faith and confession of the ancient, undivided Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils and of the first eight centuries."²

This declaration had already insisted in a previous paragraph "that the dogmatic definitions of the seven Ecumenical Councils impose limits on the individual liberty of belief not only of each individual member of the Orthodox Church, but also of those who may become united with it."

It would be an easier task on the surface to bring the Bishop of Winchester's description of the Church of England's

¹ Essay on the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, from *The Reunion of Christendom*.

² *Faith and Order*, p. 384.

Catholicity into line with what some of the leading Free Churches might be prepared to accept. If a tacit consent were first secured not to disturb the ambiguities, on which the Church of England has lived for so many centuries and which are bound up with any statement of the "Central position," a *rapprochement* might be effected. It is what those who have worked so hard on the South India scheme have attempted, and not without considerable success.

I am inclined to take a pragmatist view of the Church of England at present and to be largely guided by "what works." I am glad to belong to a Church which has a strong historical sense and a worthy "succession" of scholars, missionaries and saints. An unbroken succession of bishops neither adds to nor diminishes my confidence in my own particular ministry. I do not know whether Canon Streeter's epigram about the controversy of orders in the early Church is to be preferred to that of Mr. Grensted. The one says "All are right and all shall have prizes," the other "All are wrong and none shall have prizes," but I agree with the inference in either case that we clergy in the Church of England have no particular privileged position.

Nor do I want to regulate the policy of the Church of England by more than a qualified respect for the past. Such phrases as "to undo the Reformation" or "to complete the Reformation" are out-of-date. The Church of England is not a dismembered limb, but a new shoot with a vigorous growth of its own. To complete the Reformation, attractive as the phrase may be to those who, like myself, regard Martin Luther as one of the prophets of the Lord, is to predicate more about the Reformation than was ever in it. Reformation principles or literature can give us no guidance on our modern problems of sex, or industry, or international relationship. The world in which we live is not one in which the Fathers of the Church can help us very much. The growth of the scientific spirit, eclecticism in religion, the

new psychology of humanism are all marks of an age into which their way of thinking would be hard to fit.

The keyword of our age would seem to be Experiment. I wish it could be said that it was constructive activity. But there is no mind like Calvin's to construct an institutional Church life worthy of the twentieth century. We are not experimenting in the full freedom of the Spirit, or building upon a design which has captured our intellectual and moral enthusiasm. Nevertheless the age of experiment has begun. The modifications in organized Church life suggested in South India, cannot be isolated, even though we may expect a temporary reaction, as in the history of the Reformation. The process will go on, and we shall gradually become less concerned with fitting in the new pieces of our modern life to the old machinery than with creating something beautiful and new, which may reflect the living spirit of Christ as it moulds the thought and creative activity of our generation.

This is frankly a pragmatist position, but there are limits. Everything for the English people is spoiled by "overmuchness." Too much Evangelicalism, or Modernism, or Anglo Catholicism produces violent reactions and sometimes very unpleasant results. The religious partisan is always being corrected and put in his place in a way most irritating to himself by this fear of overmuchness, which is certainly inherent in the English.

Without the Incarnation and the Resurrection and the Gospel of Redeeming Love as focussed in the Cross of Calvary, Christianity has no challenge, no philosophy, no salvation to offer to a modern world. It might survive for a time as a romantic idyll, but, as a serious contribution to the world's need, it might as well be consigned to the scrap heap. But, beyond this stupendous yet elementary faith, there is little in Christianity that is not fluid and which cannot adapt itself to the most varied forms. It is true that Christianity has been majestically and sometimes cruelly

disciplined by the Roman Church and presents now an appearance of great rigidity. This only increases our wonder at the remarkable and multiple forms which have been created by a Christianity that has escaped the canalising efforts of a central authority.

So far as it is possible, I suggest that we should rebuild our institutional life rather with a view to the future than to the past. We are more responsible for posterity than for our ancestors. It is a greater achievement to create a sound precedent than to preserve an ancient tradition. The researches of scholars, which tend to show that primitive Christianity was not only tolerant but friendly to experiment, have prepared the way for a return to greater freedom and elasticity in pursuit of the final synthesis. I understand that, when Bishop Gore returned from a certain visit to America, he complained of the "welter" of Nonconformity which he found there. It would certainly be much better if American Nonconformists did their weltering inside a Church whose historic sense and accepted canons of taste put some check on individual exuberance, but, so long as rigidity rules the household, the young people will disport themselves outside.

We cannot hope to make all the world good Anglicans, but we may hope to create a Church or series of Churches in which the Anglican tradition blends happily with others. Something larger than Anglicanism, something other than Rome as we know it at present, is the best that I can see on the horizon for the immediate future. We have erred in the past by our devotion to Anglicanism. With what earnestness have I heard Bishop Palmer plead with the Pharisees of the Church of England that the Church in South India need not be "Anglican." We are so imbued with our Anglican outlook that we even translate the Communion Service into the Indian languages, and precipitate into the new Churches an unsatisfactory service written to compensate for Anglican lack of discipline.

This Anglican outlook, with its emphasis on an Anglican tradition, is nearly as difficult to deal with as Nationalism in relation to international comity. Here, again, we are in danger of "Overmuchness." Anglicanism, like Nationalism, is sound up to a point. Churches, like nations, must realize their freedom, enjoy their independence, shape their history and find their rightful place in the sun. As long as a Church or a Nation is persecuted or patronised, it will cherish its independence fiercely, and preserve even the most fantastic of its habits with fastidious care. The Nonconformist Churches in this country adopted quite naturally this attitude until comparatively recently. In some few parts of the country still, the intolerance or the fanaticism of the local parson keeps alive the old attitude of provincial aloofness.

But Anglicans have no excuse for resting in this temporary stage of Church development. Anglo-Catholics to their credit have long since outgrown this Anglican exclusiveness, though, unfortunately, many of them have only escaped from this Charybdis to shipwreck on the Scylla of Roman autocracy. Internationalism and despotism are not the same. Evangelicals, wherever they have been weaned from their old Tory attitude of social superiority, have also outgrown this attitude of aloofness. There was never anything in their doctrine of Grace or Orders to keep them apart from their Free Church brethren.

It is the Central Party in the Church of England, which is mainly responsible for keeping alive a certain Anglican tradition of independence, which is as difficult to deal with as Nationalism in certain quarters. The tradition of Independence rests for its members on no immovable basis. It is not definitely asserted that, without a Bishop, there can be no Church. Nonconformist ministers are admitted, perhaps a little hesitatingly or reluctantly, to be "true ministers of the Word and Sacraments." They employ a multitude of friendly, if ambiguous, phrases, and appear at times to have

visions of that wider order of society which internationalism suggests, whether in ecclesiastical or civil affairs. Yet when the time comes for constructive action, this great section of the Church hesitates to draw the inferences from the position which it is presumed to hold.

It was the sudden emphasis placed on the necessity of reordination that brought to an end the series of Lambeth Conferences on Reunion between representatives of the Church of England and the Free Churches. After the declaration: "The Free Church Ministries are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church," the demand for reordination seemed inexplicable. Dr. Carnegie Simpson's words, reviewing the circumstances immediately before the Lambeth Conference, show how painful is the impression produced by the waverings of the Central Party. Speaking of the present impasse to Union, he says:

"It does not lie in episcopacy. It lies in an episcopacy which—especially after declaring that non-episcopal ministries are 'real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church'—*insists on re-ordaining*. That is the impasse which the coming Lambeth Conference must face. It is impossible to think that what we have here had presented to us is the last word which the wisdom and charity of that conference will say to non-episcopal Christendom. I add that the issue is really more critical for Anglicanism than for the Free Churches. Anglicanism is sometimes called, as regards union, a 'Bridge Church.' I should congratulate it if it earns and retains the right to such a title. But one must make this observation—that a bridge, to be of use, must be open at both ends."¹

I think that the immediate efforts of all who believe in a larger Church, inclusive but not confined to Anglicanism,

¹ *The Call for Christian Unity*, p. 132.

must be directed to the conversion of that Central Body of Church opinion, which clings too closely to the Anglican tradition. If the Church of England is in any sense to be the Bridge Church of the future, someone at least must pass over it. At present it resembles too much a road under repair blocked at both ends. Nor is it very sensible to say that the Bridge cannot be used, unless there is equal traffic from either side; in other words, that, unless Catholic and Protestants in equal numbers are baptised into the Anglican tradition, the *status quo* must be preserved. Something larger, more constructive, more original is needed than the circle of ideas which gathers round this simile of the Bridge Church so attractive to the Anglican mind. No Church at the moment has reached such a development either of spiritual power or of institutional efficiency that it can claim to be a model for any other. So long as the "Bridge" idea dominates the mind, we shall instinctively think of the future in terms of Anglicanism, and, although we may not actually insist on other Churches passing over it, we shall certainly be tempted to set up toll gates and exact tribute from passengers on the King's Highway.

The Church of the future—"that Church other than Anglican, other than Rome"—which will eventually challenge the majesty and tyranny of Rome for a final synthesis or a final separation, will be created eventually not so much by a process of transition from one to another, or by an amalgamation of existing institutions, as by internal disintegration and reintegration within the separate bodies preparatory to rebuilding on a more generous and elastic scale. No doubt amalgamations will proceed—they are taking place already—at each stage of the gradual discovery by the separate Churches of how few are the barriers which need necessarily divide them. Nevertheless, it is the internal disintegration and reintegration within the Churches themselves which makes possible these successive steps.

Let me hasten, however, to say that this Church of the future need neither be formless nor colourless, nor do I visualise it without doctrine or sacraments. I hope that a place may be found within it for that small body of people who, while they may hold a sacramental view of life, find no necessity in their religious experience and no ultimate authority for the sacraments which we enjoy. The conscientious objector has a recognized place within a tolerant State; much more has the Quaker, with his depth of Christian experience, a place within any reorganized Church which seeks to express the Christian spirit.

But this Church would rest solidly on the Incarnation and glow with an Evangelical spirit. It would not hesitate to preach the Gospel of Redeeming Grace, and to proclaim salvation to the world and to the individual wholly in the name of Christ. It would make no compromise with humanism or eclecticism or all the other pitiable substitutes for the Christian Gospel. Strong in its deliverance from sectarianism and its freedom from strife about non-essentials, rejoicing in its new-found fellowship, it would give such a witness to the world as would command its hearing and respect.

I should like to describe such a Church as Catholic as well as Evangelical, for I believe Catholicity lies in the future rather than in the past, and that the kind of Church which I have in mind represents the true catholicity of the Gospel. So long as the word Catholic remains soaked in its Roman implications, the word Protestant must remain, and a sturdy Protestantism must continue to supplement a rigid Catholicism. But with a new conception of Catholicism the old terminology might become obsolete. There is no inherent charm about Protestantism; the coldness and bleakness of the Dutch Churches, whose architecture has been turned topsy turvy to suit a Protestant ideal, is sufficient proof to the contrary. Moral power and conviction is to be found in plenty in Protestantism—glorious, stubborn witness to

the rights of the human conscience, more especially in the past. But its æsthetic development has been fatally affected by the continuous attitude of opposition which has been forced upon it. No individual or society can be continually "in opposition" without suffering from complexes or obsessions. The early history of Protestantism has left its mark upon it. It has come out of a great battle for spiritual independence victorious but maimed!

The Catholicism which I have in mind would serve all the rights of the human conscience for which Protestantism contended. It would, at the same time, present to the world an alternative to the Catholicism of Rome, which is a synonym for exclusiveness. We must admit that there is still room in the world for one exclusive Church, with its despotic claims, its hierarchy and its drilled obedience. We must admit, too, that the Church of Rome is capable of meeting the spiritual needs of vast numbers, and, therefore, of postponing for how long we do not know the disintegrating and reintegrating process, which would seem eventually to be essential to the renewal of life.

Nevertheless, there is need of another kind of Catholicism, inclusive, federal, unifying, recognizing differences of temperament and conviction, and finding room and freedom for them in the architecture of a new institutional life. It is this kind of Catholicism alone into which Protestantism could allow itself to be absorbed, and into which it could entrust the freedom for which it has fought, and the spiritual treasures which it has accumulated during the last four centuries. Protestants are justified in asking at every point, where amalgamation is offered to them in the name of Catholicity, what is the kind of Catholicity which is intended. Is it the Catholicity of Rome (or a disguised form of it, with much the same implications which they long ago rejected), or is it a new form of Catholicity which has only been made possible by the previous service of Protestantism in recreating the moral and spiritual conscience of the Church?

It is on this point that the leaders of our own Church must quite definitely make up their minds. It is impossible to ordinary human beings to move North, South, East or West at the same time. A great deal of time is lost in fruitless negotiations for Church Unity because the general direction in which we intend to move has not been decided beforehand. Efforts to restore it to an antiquated *status quo* and to bring the Church of the twentieth century into the same mould as the Church of the fifth or the tenth century are quite hopeless. The new wine of the modern spirit will burst the bottle. It is only where Churches are themselves moving forward that *rapprochement* is desirable. Otherwise the rate of progress of the new Catholicism would be definitely arrested, and the latter end would be worse than the first.

The first question that needs to be asked in planning future developments of Church Unity is not "What did you believe and practise in the past?" but "What do you mean to believe and to practise in the future?" The discussion about origins, as far as Orders are concerned, has arrived at a stalemate. The modern mind refuses to consider it any longer as of the first importance. It is the future that matters, the "Church that is to be" that holds the field.

CHAPTER II

THE ESTABLISHMENT

"Let us treasure it against the day when the alienations born of former wrongs shall have perished from English minds, and the visible fellowship between English Christians shall be restored, based no longer on the shifting sands of political expediency but on the indestructible foundation of a common discipleship. Of the Establishment of the Church of England I would venture to say in the words of the Prophet: 'Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.' It enshrines the memory of a great past: it utters the prophecy of a greater future."

Dr. Henson, "In Defence of the English Church," p. 108 f.

IT IS only the "eternal background" which makes the discussion of institutional religion tolerable. It is only the far horizons of the last chapter, which give point to the discussion of particular modifications in particular localities. Unless some vision of the future intrigues the imagination and stirs the will, we are very ready to accept the policy of "Give peace in our time, O Lord"—especially if we happen at the moment to be reasonably comfortable. Utopographers, to use Mr. H. G. Wells' expression, are a great asset, where an evening's "great talk" is required to relieve the monotony or the banality of ordinary conversation; it is more difficult to convince people of their political or religious value. But some kind of Utopia must galvanize the constructive energies of all who still believe in institutional religion. Some concrete shape must be given to the Kingdom of God on earth; some escape must be found from the absurd boundaries which, like tariff walls, impede the free trade of the Gospel; some form must be given to the amorphous

Protestantism, which occupies such a large part of our immediate vision.

It may seem a small matter to discuss the relation of the Establishment, as we know it in the Church of England, to the Church of the future. It is so easy to cut it out from any picture of the future, and it simplifies the issues to do so. Perhaps "issues" is hardly the best term, but I am trying to reduce the use of that hard-worked word "problem" to a minimum. Many times it looked as if the Establishment must certainly disappear in the gradual secularizing of Society, and there are some who think that such is the inevitable end. But there are so many peculiar factors connected with the English Establishment, the English character, the English attitude to religion, the pragmatist attitude to life in general, the indifference to other nations' experience and the general preference for home grown institutions, that it is at least arguable that it may continue—unless the Church clamours for the dissolution of partnership. Surface irritation is no proof of any general belief in the unworkability of the alliance. The State may be regarded at the moment as quiescent.

It is the Church, or one particular section of the Church, which is attacking the Establishment at present. Into the immediate causes which have produced this agitation, I do not propose to enter at the moment. It would take us deep into the tangled story of Prayer Book Revision and the twice repeated rejection by the House of Commons of the Deposited Book. My own impression is that this particular agitation will prove to be ephemeral. The Church as a whole will not rally to the defence of Church "Independence." The occasion is not worth while. A Prayer Book measure, hotly opposed by various sections of the Church, carried by what proved to be deceptive majorities, and foolishly linked up with an unsettled Sacramental controversy, was rejected by Parliament in the interests of the Church as well as of the nation. There was no

hostility to the Church as a whole, and no sign that a Church at peace within itself would be impeded in reforming its liturgy. Only one caveat seemed to emerge from the incident. The Church of England must continue to stand in the succession of the Reformed Churches, if its official position was to be recognized and its partnership welcomed. As all the official leaders, however, professed their adhesion to Reformation principles, the adjustment of the difficulties which arose ought not to have proved insuperable. The general sense of the Church is clear that the quarrel is not worth pursuing, and that Parliament, however regrettably, acted within its rights freely conceded or endorsed by the Enabling Act which was promoted by the Church itself.

It would be a great advantage if the discussion of Establishment could be separated from any particular "incident." The Archbishop of York made an attempt to do so in the speech with which he introduced to the Assembly, on February 5, 1930, the proposal for a Commission on the relations of Church and State. He told of his conscience troubled long before by the difficulties of interpreting the Declaration of Assent, in which the clergyman uses the words in relation to the Prayer Book: "I will use the form in the said book prescribed and none other except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority." In a later passage in proposing the appointment of the Commission he said "what was asked for was not, in a fit of resentment, to set up a Commission to tell them how to get rid of what had proved a hindrance to their desires, but rather, inasmuch as what had taken place in 1927 and 1928 had thrown a new light upon the situation in which they stood . . . to review the whole field again and to fashion a new policy." So great was the confidence in the Archbishop that the Assembly closed its eyes to the obvious difficulties of dissociating the appointment of the Commission from the action of Parliament, and voted loyally for his motion. Whether we can logically or not separate the Commission from the Parliamentary incident,

I am sure that the Archbishop's intention was sound, and that the Church will be grateful for the *tour de force* which he employed on that occasion.

Let us then proceed to the discussion unperturbed by recent events. The question is whether Establishment is compatible with any larger integration of institutional religion in this country. It is essentially a local problem. In the nature of things a fuller discussion might one day be called for if re-union at home were to be carried further afield, but for the moment we are concerned with a domestic situation. Could the Free Churches unite with an Established Church, and could the Church of the future in this country develop in spiritual power on any basis of Establishment?

It will be observed that I have stated the thesis of the discussion in terms of the future and not of the past. There is no doubt that the Church of England in the past has constantly been harassed by its connection with the State, but there is no proof that the State connection has prevented the way of spiritual revival. The indifference of the Spirit of God to the particular machinery through which it works is one of the perplexing marvels of institutional religion. Piety and good works have been found in the Anglican Church in every generation, and we have no means of judging how far the witness of the Church of England would have been higher and purer if the State connection had never existed. The tremendous strides, which the Church has taken in pastoral ministration, missionary enterprise and social service since the eighteenth century, make us hesitate to assert that further spiritual advance cannot be made under the present system. We have found means to remove one abuse after another, and many of the evils which we once thought to be inherent in Establishment have proved to be detachable from it.

The creation of the Church Assembly, with its recognition of the rights of the laity and the subsequent filtering down to the parishes—through the Parochial Church Councils—

of an ordered Church life with rights and responsibilities, has given a new impetus to, and a new justification for the Establishment. The steady trend of developing Church life has been cutting the ground from under the feet of those who denied the possibility of achieving a reasonable freedom and a reasonable power of reconstructing Church life under the Establishment. Progress has been continuous until the recent Parliamentary incident, for which our own statesmen and the episcopal leadership must take the larger portion of the blame.

I am prepared to argue that, from the inference of the past, the Establishment can be made to serve the interests of spiritual religion in this country. The cry of Spiritual Independence is an attractive one, and we are all agreed that "in the last resort" the Church must be free to shape its own life. But the will of the Church, as expressed by one Potentate at Rome, or by a Bench of Bishops, or by temporary majorities in the Church Assembly, may be very different from the will of Christ for the Church. It is a very difficult thing to secure spiritual independence from the assaults of ecclesiastical tyranny or ecclesiastical partisanship. The fundamental error which seems to lurk in the insistent demand on theoretical grounds for the separation of Church from State is that the will of God for His Church can only be discovered through official channels of Church machinery. The diffused Christianity, which is to be found even in a semi-Christian state, may be a very valuable revising element in ascertaining the Church's line of usefulness. This diffused Christianity in a country like ours can express itself through the Press, through Parliament and through public opinion generally. So long as the Church fails to retain within her borders whole communities of Christians like the Nonconformists and numbers of other people of Christian conviction and experience, it is well that in some way, however clumsy, their influence should be felt upon the development of the main stream of Church

life in this country. The voice of the Church might conceivably become the voice of a Rump from which all the best people had been excluded! It is the State—so long as it remains susceptible to Christian ideals and sympathetic with the Christian religion—which provides the most effective means for focussing this non-official guidance of which the Church often stands in need before making up its mind.

The resentment which some people feel towards any interference from without in the affairs of the Church of England is really based upon a pessimistic philosophy. To them the Church is no longer in faith or aspiration the Church of the English people. It has dwindled to a sect. It manages its own affairs, like the Christadelphians or the Seventh Day Adventists, without arousing a tremor of outside interest. It is severe, aloof, dogmatic, owing no man anything, not even "to love one another."

Such resentment disappears when the mind is captured by a new conception of the Church of England, and when we see it as the nucleus of a larger and more representative Church in this country. If its future lies there—if growth, not shrinkage, is to be its portion, if a Church greater than Anglican is to arise in this country—then every move it makes and every decision taken should be related to the larger interests involved. Advice will not be mistaken for interference, and even opposition, when it arises, will not be regarded as factious. There is a big ideal to be realised; there is something worth while to be hammered out by many minds working together in co-operation. The State, reluctant to let religion go, yet awkward and shy whenever the official representatives of religion press it too hard with refinements it does not understand, will not be denounced but sympathetically considered. The separated bodies, which, in her foolish zeal for Uniformity, the Church of England either cast out or let go will be regarded as still having a stake and an interest in the doings of the Church of England. Their voice, disregarded in the past, must count in the future. The

dangerous inbreeding of thought and ritual and practice, which has exaggerated our sacramental position and partly sterilized our Christian experience, must be exchanged for a larger life and more far-reaching associations.

I would urge that the right policy with regard to the State, as we contemplate the future, is not that we should seek to break the nexus which unites us to it, but that we should work for a modified establishment in which the larger Church "other than Anglican, other than Rome" might share. It is a serious responsibility to seek for release when the State is learning quite as rapidly as the Church to accept the necessary adjustments which spiritual life and institutional efficiency demand. The release would have world-wide repercussion, and would be misleading to the world at large. It would suggest a deadlock between Church and Nation on spiritual matters which does not in fact exist. It would remove from the shaping of the national history an ethos and an influence which has been to its advantage. It would bring to an end at the most interesting moment of its testing a great experiment—which may be stated thus. Can a modern State, in the face of all the different elements of which it is composed, recognize the Christian religion as providing its cultural influence and its ultimate standard of conduct? It is far too intriguing a proposition to be lightly dismissed. There is a spice of spiritual adventure about the attempt to realize it which makes the alternative of cutting the painter a very dull affair. I prefer to undertake the voyage even at the risk of shipwreck.

But I have not much hope of reaching harbour unless it is the larger Church, "other than Anglican, other than Rome" that undertakes the voyage. A Church of England slowly dwindling to a sect cannot provide for the spiritual culture of a people. Its magnificent cathedrals stand waiting for a larger life to flow through them. Its institutional life needs rationalising. Large sections of the religious life of the country outside the Roman Communion are untouched by its

influence. The task of providing for the spiritual needs of the nation is far beyond it in its present stage of decline or development. To continue to function as the Established Church—in present circumstances—is to challenge disaster. Numerical weakness would alone disable it and discount its influence. The remarkable trust and confidence which has so far been generously extended to it both by the State and by Nonconformists cannot be indefinitely prolonged. The demands, the responsibilities, the opportunities, in view of the complexities of a modern State, are beyond the power of the Church of England to fulfil.

I wonder whether it is possible to persuade my Free Church brethren to modify their traditional attitude to Establishment. Such remarkable changes have been passing over the whole field of modern thought that I am not without hope. The Free Church attitude towards the value and method of religious teaching in the Schools is very different from what it was twenty years ago. The appreciation of historic continuity has made its appearance with their own historic development. The art of worship has been increasingly studied, and a new sense of Catholicity has been acquired. Does the attitude towards Establishment remain precisely where it was? Has the freedom from the State created an environment intrinsically more advantageous to the development of spiritual life?

It is very difficult for those outside the Church of England to understand how a system, which is theoretically so vulnerable as the present Establishment, may work in many respects so advantageously. It has prevented the development of any kind of organisation like the Roman Curia in the English Church. It has given the individual clergy of the Church a more independent position than any other system has achieved. The irremovable nature of the tenure of his office has encouraged freedom of thought and fearlessness of action on the part of many clergy. A certain prestige capable of being directed to high moral and spiritual ends has been conferred.

The benefits to the Church as a whole from its connection with the State have not been unsubstantial. No particular party has been able to secure permanent domination. In a Church, which is as little homogeneous as the Church of England, this check upon the working of the machine has been salutary. Greater freedom has been secured for the rise of new movements; greater resistance has been offered to disintegrating forces by the Establishment than would be readily imagined. It has given colour and variety to Church life and has kept alive national interest in its doings. It has intervened again and again to give the exceptional man, far in advance of the average Church thought, the opportunity which popular ecclesiastical suffrage would never have given him. In its own way, defective in method but sound in operation, it has given the laity through Parliament and the Prime Minister an effective voice in the affairs of the Church.

At the present time it is rendering to the Church no small service in helping to hold it together through a crisis in which the clash of parties has become acute. It is easy to be scornful and to say that a Church held together in this way is not worth preserving. Quite true—if this were the only bond that held it. Marriage held together merely by a legal bond is not very satisfactory, but the bond often gives time for reflection and a better mind. It is in this way that Establishment is working at present.

All the same, I believe, that it can be made to work infinitely better in the future than in the past if the greater Church of which I think comes into being. With a Church really representative of the English people, accepting, as in the case of the Scottish Church, the one fundamental postulate "that it stands in the succession of the reformed Churches," Parliament would make what new arrangements might be desirable. There is nothing which so strikes the imagination of the nation as unifying action on the part of the Church. There is nothing to which it makes a quicker and readier response. Its instinct for the things that matter most is often

sounder than that of the Church. If the report of the Archbishops' Commission on the Relation of Church and State comes back coloured with larger hopes and aspirations for Home Reunion, its specific suggestions are sure of a sympathetic hearing from Parliament. If that flexibility of outlook is lacking, they will receive no more than judicial consideration.

I could wish that the report of the Commission could be delayed until some progress had been made with Home Reunion, or at least until consultation had taken place with Nonconformist or other opinion which is bound eventually to be affected. So many of our steps are taken with little or no relation to the ever-widening horizons of the age in which we live.

Let me return to the question whether my Free Church brethren still summarily reject the idea of establishment in any shape or form. Their answer is bound to affect very considerably the minds of those who think of Church development in terms of wider expansion. I suggest that a Reformed Establishment—securing endowments, securing autonomy based on accepted general principles, securing the rights of the laity, and securing a national recognition of religion—is possible, with the concurrence of Free Churchmen, as a policy for a United Church.

There are signs, I think, that the secular drift (of which we have heard so much in recent years), is giving place to a heart hunger and a search for something which may satisfy the old eternal restlessness of mankind. Secularism indeed has been much misrepresented and maligned, and a false antithesis set up between it and religion. It is not less religion but *more* religion of a better quality that the great mass of English people vaguely desires. The Churches at present seem ineffective, and there is only a lukewarm interest in their institutional life.

But this national Church which I have in mind would carry with it the moral credentials of an Established Church for the

English people. It would be attractive through the healing of schism, and powerful in virtue of its united witness. It would be representative of all social strata and enriched with variety of spiritual experience. It would disarm criticism and eradicate suspicion. It would go forward with the momentum of a great spiritual achievement.

The practical difficulties could be overcome if only the will were forthcoming. Group discussions amongst the rank and file of the Churches concerned could prepare the way for constructive action. Sometimes the greatest reforms begin from below upwards rather than from above downwards. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and the influence of little groups on whom the Spirit of God has laid "a concern" for a certain matter cannot be calculated or circumscribed. Cannot these dry bones live? Cannot the Establishment be reclothed with beauty and power in the expanding life of a United Church accepted by the nation whose spiritual life it serves?

CHAPTER III

THE RELIEF OF TENSION WITHIN THE CHURCH

"There is silence in the evening when the long days cease,
And a million men are praying for an ultimate release
From strife and sweat and sorrow—they are praying for peace.
But God is marching on."

C. H. Sorley.

It is greatly to be desired that the tension within the Church, which is so acute between the different parties, should be relieved. This is no plea for the abolition of parties and for a general fusion into a central party. The central Party has its useful duty to perform in expounding "the middle way," and giving much needed support to authority. But the Church of England, or indeed any institution which is active and growing, is inconceivable without a right and a left wing. It would also be exceedingly dull. If the call to achieve a common mind were to be interpreted as an invitation to cease individual thinking or to abandon the pursuit of principles, the imposition of a common mind would be a curse and not a blessing.

Sometimes the appeals for unity within the Church have had the appearance of a desire to impose a common mind largely for institutional reasons, and many because of their love of truth have revolted against them. The need of a "settlement" on any particular question is less important than that it should be settled rightly. Nothing in the world can stop the clash of conflicting views on Orders and Sacraments in the Church of England. These particular controversies will work themselves out like the Calvinistic and other controversies of the past. They will

disappear when men are no longer interested in them, or some new apprehension of divine truth undercuts the premises of the contending parties.

All that can be reasonably looked for is that these controversies—which are inseparable from the exercise of a rational mind—should be conducted in a Christian spirit, with as few breaches of the law of love as possible, with fairness to the other side, with readiness to confess mistakes and with a constant willingness to extend one's own grasp of truth.

The cry that is often raised "Have done with controversy," is quite unsound. Neither the search for truth nor the witness to the faith can get on without it. From the time that Paul opposed Peter on the question of the circumcision of the Gentiles and brought his controversy to a successful issue the Church has never been without controversy. It might be argued that the great ages of the Church are essentially ages of controversy. Men of strong conviction brush impatiently aside the suggestion that to contend for their convictions is to soil their hands or to impair their spiritual life.

It is well that the outsider should realise this; otherwise he judges the Church with quite unnecessary harshness. Truth does not develop as noiselessly or as painlessly as the budding of a flower. The guidance of the Spirit manifests itself as the resultant of the parallelogram of forces. There is no supernatural method by which the right choice is suddenly revealed or the right solution perfect and complete drops down out of heaven. Sound progress is dependent upon a variety of factors—honesty in the search for truth, constancy in the spirit of prayer, and a certain sense of relativity and proportion which is very difficult to define. The promise that the Spirit of God "shall guide you into all truth" is only progressively realised, and allowance must be made in the process for the natural conditions of human life and human nature through which the Spirit works.

But, having said this, it cannot be denied that some relief to the tension in the Church of England is desirable in its own interests and for the sake of the outsider whom it seeks to influence. The dust of controversy is a significant phrase. There is too much dust flying about in the Church of England, and a few capable housemaids with brooms and pails of water might well be employed to lay some of it. There are a good many people choking and coughing in their spiritual life because of the superabundance of dust at the present time. It is quite a reasonable criticism that the atmosphere of controversy in the Church might resemble more that of the Royal Society than of the political arena. The guidance of the Spirit of God is not so completely conditioned by the operation of natural human forces that it cannot subdue the *odium ecclesiasticum* or tame the worst excesses of partisanship.

The difficulty is to keep in touch with reality, and to make any suggestions for the relief of tension which a good and earnest controversialist, who believes in the pugnacity as well as in the love of God, cannot easily tear into ribbons. He will not give up witnessing to his convictions for the sake of that much mishandled thing called Peace. He will not be persuaded "to confine himself to positive statements" of his own position without comparing them or contrasting them with statements of the other side. He will not go about his work in blinkers or ask his reason to run between the shafts provided for him.

The advice which is given to him from time to time to "cease firing" is unfortunately often suspect. Sometimes it comes from people who, in his judgment, are much more concerned with "keeping the Church together" than in basing its teaching upon ascertained truth. It is not surprising if the man, to whom truth means much more than institutional life, or who is in love with a particular spiritual ideal of the Church, does not listen very attentively. Sometimes it comes from people of spiritual feeling but very

little historical sense, who really believe that great dividing issues will dissolve like pearls in vinegar in a general friendly atmosphere of agreement to differ. Sometimes it comes from people whose minds are very light soil, who plead "that they are sick to death" of a subject when its first novelty has worn off. It is not always easy for the sincere controversialist to be patient with this kinematographic type of mind.

Where so many fail to get a hearing, it is, perhaps, daring on my part to make some suggestions. I am reminded of the commentator, who having (as he thought), successfully pulverized all the emendations of the text made by his predecessors, began his own emendations with the words "*Omnes frustra. Sed ego.*" I have, however, one advantage—that I have never doubted the necessity of controversy or hesitated to take part in it where I thought spiritual gain could accrue. And if, to some who believe that controversy is *always* unchristian, I seem like Satan rebuking sin, from others, who know how severe a test of the spiritual life controversy involves, I may expect a certain sympathy and interest.

The first thing that I would say, and it is the only thing, I am afraid, that I can usefully say about dogmatic theology is this. We ought to be able to make more use of the underlying distinctions between Prose and Poetry in our interpretation of the mind of Christ. Far too much theology is written and far too much of it is written in prose. Reams and reams of prose—hard, logical and precise—is written defining the faith in a "Catholic" or "Evangelical" direction. The vehicle, through which these treatises are given to the world, especially Professors' Prose and Parsons' Prose, is unsuited to conveying the changing colours, the elusive wonders, the poetical texture of the mind of Christ. The prose habit is tying us down to a kind of literalism in our interpretation of dogma from which the mind of the poet can and will one day deliver us. Our present habit of

systematising the words of Jesus and constructing out of them logical foundations on which we set up a reasoned and closely knit faith is essentially a prose habit. Much of the beauty and a large part of the relative meaning of His words are beyond the power of the prose habit to convey. Works on doctrine become more and more pedestrian and more and more remote from our Lord's way of thinking and teaching as the prose habit works itself out in headings, chapters, analyses, appendices and even footnotes.

The solution of our sacramental controversy in the Church of England does not lie in any of the ordinary ways which have yet been tried. So long as the prose habit binds us with its spell, we shall continue writing our chapters and adding our footnotes. The foolish search for a "formula," which may conceal our differences from the public and preserve them for our private use, is only for those who have a servile faith in prose. What poet ever looked for a formula? What use did Jesus ever make of such an instrument?

Later on I shall insert a rough sketch of the kind of interpretation of the Holy Communion which I imagine a Warrior Poet might give to it, but I wish now to suggest for the consideration of all controversialists, including myself, that all these questions of the presence of Christ "under the species," "with the species," "independent of the species," which we are constantly discussing in relation to the Sacramental bread and wine, are bound up with our deplorable habit of thinking in prose. The innumerable statements of sacramental doctrine, with their meticulous definitions of "how and when" which are produced for successive conferences on Church order, take us not nearer but farther away from one another. There is infinitely more of the peculiar ethos—the suddenness—the subtle simplicity of the mind of Jesus in sacramental matters in these lines of Ralph Hodgson than in any of the confessional statements at Lausanne:—

He came and took me by the hand
Up to a red rose tree,
He kept His meaning to Himself,
But gave a rose to me.
I did not pray Him to lay bare
The mystery to me,
Enough the rose was Heaven to smell,
And His own face to see.

It will take us time to adjust our way of thinking to the discovery of the limitations of prose and the possibilities of poetry. Ordinary people are still inclined to think that prose is true and poetry make-believe. Thus, if I suggested that the Creed should be restated in poetry, many, still bound by the prose habit, would immediately jump to the conclusion that I was doing so because I did not believe it to be true. But, when the essential meaning of poetry is better understood, we shall be able to use it more frequently as a means of expressing the eternal and of escaping from the controversies incidental to a strictly prose vocabulary.

Another way by which the tension can be legitimately decreased is through more corporate thinking in terms of "the Outsider." I do not suggest that this will lessen our hold of principles, but that it will give us a better sense of proportion. It is really more important that England should be converted to Christ than that England should be converted to Christ in the Mass. It is really more important that a man should have a living experience of the power of Christ in his life than a formally correct faith. It is really more important that a man should be a good Christian than a convinced Anglo-Catholic or Liberal Evangelical. These are not mere truisms. The recognition of a sense of proportion is a valuable asset to any controversialist desirous of carrying with him the sympathy of the great mass of people, who are more interested in what is instinctively Christian than what is violently partisan.

It is asserted that everyone loves a fight, and that renewed interest in religion has resulted from our recent acute controversies. Neither statement is wholly true. It is not everyone who loves a fight. Some are repelled by it. Nor is the interest that has been aroused altogether religious. It is partly a sporting interest. The insatiable desire to lay odds and to back a winner is sometimes responsible. It is distressing to the genuine controversialist—who believes he is witnessing for something of primary importance—to find that it is merely the superficial aspect of his quarrel that is attracting attention in certain quarters. Still more distressing is it if, with the reaction that comes so often in popular feeling, he finds that eventually he has damaged his own cause by excessive zeal.

More corporate thinking on our responsibility to the "Outsider" would, I think, modify our attitude to one another and the expression of our particular views. We must make the man on the fringes of the Church realise, somehow or other, that Christ comes first with us and not a party triumph. The more intense we are in our witness to the truth, the more careful we must be about breaches of the law of love. Every sensible person recognizes the frailties of the human temper and makes allowance for it. No one wants strong personalities to lose their strength or Church editorials to lose their edge. But the outsider rightly expects that the general conduct of Church controversy shall be on a higher plane than the more rough and tumble affairs with which he himself is familiar. We do not want to cause him to offend.

It is, I believe, by constantly thinking of the outsider—not as a critic whose approval must be secured, but as the indeterminate potential Christian whom we are all seeking to win for Christ—that we shall find some further relief from the present tension. Domestic quarrels cannot decently be carried on in the presence of visitors. The presence of guests raises the tone of civility within the

household. Much more, the recognition that the people, whom we most desire to bring permanently into the family, are listening to us will make us careful how and what we speak.

I am very conscious that this is an imperfect illustration, and that the outsider is entitled to know all the real facts of the household, and that we must deal with him on a basis of absolute sincerity and truth. He cannot join us otherwise. But I am not arguing for the cessation of controversy. On the contrary, I am defending it, and trying to suggest reasonable ways of limiting the strain on the spiritual lives of those engaged in it.

Some of the ways, which are being urged at present by authority, do not seem to me to be very hopeful. Great stress is laid upon the value of corporate study organized on the basis of Ruridecanal Chapters. It is maintained that the effect on different types of minds of studying together will have unifying results. Undoubtedly, where the leader of the group has special gifts for the task, some relief of tension may be secured. But these kind of groups, which are created by authority, are apt to flicker and die. They are not the creation of the genuine group mind. Unlike the groups organised by the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement, which have done continuous study for the last twenty years, they are not founded upon a strong sense of brotherhood or built with a view to permanence.

At the best the value of corporate study in modifying the kind of controversy which I have in mind would be very meagre. Leaders of thought could hardly be expected to leave their own studies for the studies of other people. As men get older they become more set in their ways. They have worked out their own habits of study for themselves. They read because they are interested, and pursue a particular subject because they have chosen it themselves. They cannot keep pace with a group. The secondary advantage of securing more unity for the Church

by joining a group will not appeal very strongly. Study (whether scientific or religious) reaches a University stage when it must be pursued for its own sake alone, and the most well-meaning efforts to exploit it in the interests of some deserving object will be coldly received.

More hopeful is the progress which is being made in easing the strain in the practical working of the Church's institutional life. The recent measures, passed by the Church Assembly for dealing with Church Patronage, will bring some relief to the incessant warfare of capturing parishes in the interests of a particular party or point of view. If the map of London could be compared with the map of thirty years ago, it would be seen how great are the areas which have been painted the Anglo-Catholic colour, and which once were Evangelical. The process has not been devoid of cruelty. The Episcopal protests against the crude attempts of the Protestant Party to redress the balance in the country by the purchase of advowsons are not entirely disingenuous. Evangelical parishes have often been treated shamefully in the past by Bishops who have thrust in upon them men of such alien views and unsympathetic temperament, that they have destroyed every vestige of Church life which they found there. A central church like St. Martin's, Birmingham, received until recently a steady stream of such people who had been driven out not only from membership but from office in the suburban churches. A good half of its present membership is composed of these exiles from their natural homes.

It cannot be denied that many Bishops are themselves responsible for stirring up the spirit of reprisals in the Church. Men of deep conviction came to think that war had been declared upon them, and acted accordingly. As happens always in warfare, men soon switch from a high gear to a low gear in morals, and the struggle for the capture of livings and the methods adopted in securing them (in which both Anglo-Catholics and Protestants have

engaged), have brought no credit to the Church of England. But the way to abolish the lower ethics of warfare is to abolish warfare itself. It is useless to expect one side not to push an advantage when it can get it, if it is convinced that the other side is only waiting its turn to do the same. Some of the pious horror of the wickedness of "the other side" is like our own pious horror, during the war of the wickedness of the Germans, which we promptly proceeded to emulate or to excel.

It is too much to expect that this warfare can be abolished by the Church Assembly. Great psychical changes as well as theological adjustments, must pass over the Church of England before we achieve constructive peace. But the Church Assembly has done well in securing that all transfers of advowsons shall take place in the full glare of publicity, so that public opinion may be informed. It has done something to recognise the rights of Church members by securing that no appointment to a benefice by a patron can go through automatically and without question, unless the Parochial Church Council—through its representatives—is content to leave it in his hands. The checks that have been devised, in case the Parochial Church Council is uneasy about the proposed appointment, are sufficiently substantial to make it unlikely that violent and disruptive changes will be introduced into many parishes in the future. Some kind of equilibrium susceptible to reasonable change of thought and the necessity of new experiment may eventually be secured. If so, we shall have removed one of the most irritating causes of tension in the working of our patronage and parochial system.

Wider measures of relief are suggested by some for dealing with the strain under which the whole institutional life of the Church of England suffers. Some ask that people like myself should join the Nonconformists, others ask that the extreme Anglo-Catholics (particulars not

defined) should join the Roman Church. Curiously enough I think both propositions should be taken on their merits and considered seriously. In spite of the marvellous way in which Anglican theologians can so present the teaching of the Church of England that it seems equally a possible home for the Eastern Orthodox and the English Nonconformist in our own day, (and possibly a home for the Roman Catholic to-morrow), I feel there are great dividing lines separating our future from the Church of Rome. Catholicity "other than that of Rome" seems to be the only kind of Catholicity worth working for, and if I were forbidden to work for it I suppose I should cease to be an Anglican.

Yet as I have no desire to relieve the tension in the Church of England to the small degree that my own departure would relieve it, it is ungracious to suggest that anyone else should relieve it in the opposite direction. Something very surprising, however, may conceivably happen one day. It may take the form of a voluntary and friendly exodus after the model of the South India scheme.

It is not an easy matter to discuss, for it is almost impossible not to give offence. To make any suggestion for a Uniat Church is supposed to be a breach of fellowship. But Mr. Kenneth Ingram (a well known Anglo-Catholic writer, and editor of *The Green Quarterly*) is not averse to the idea, as these words will show.

"I have come to believe that the formation of such a jurisdiction, into which Anglo-Catholics can 'contract out,' while remaining an integral part of the Anglican Communion and in full communion with the English episcopate, is an inevitable feature of any future Anglican settlement."

The South India scheme has shown that it is possible to construct a new Church which can be a branch of the

Catholic Church and with which the Church of England can contemplate Intercommunion. It is an adventure with the Free Churches. Perhaps an adventure with Rome may not be impossible—or the creation of a Uniat Church consisting of our own extremists who would remain in communion with us and still persevere with their policy of a settlement with Rome. This “Bridge Church” of Anglicanism might begin to deserve its name if it succeeded in throwing out spans or arcs to bridge the gap on either side.

The idea will seem fantastic to many, and yet some of those in high authority in the Church have given it serious consideration. The reason why a desperate expedient (as it must seem to some) should still receive attention, is the longing to reduce the tension in the Church of England to reasonable limits. The Catholicity that Rome stands for is impossible for us to adopt as a United Church. Those who are steadily moving in that direction will—if they persist—split the Church of England from top to bottom. Almost any other permutations are conceivable, but not a blending of present Roman and Anglican ideals. A Uniat Church might solve the difficulty of those who can neither bend the Church of England to their desires, nor find happiness in the Church of Rome. The suggestion, however much it may be derided or mis-understood, is offered not in any spirit of defiance but as an olive branch of peace.

What remains to be said after these high matters may seem of small account, but I would add that a certain sense of gaiety, lightness of touch and a wholesome sense of humour relieve the strain even in matters ecclesiastical. The controversialist has much to learn before he becomes the finely tempered instrument which Christ can freely use in the service of the truth. He must lose the bitter note of satire which some able people employ. He must be ready to smile kindly and make his best points with

a kind of apologetic grace. He must graduate in the school of humour. When the controversialist has himself learnt how to relax, the tension of the controversy in which he is engaged will relax also. Perhaps we all take ourselves a little too seriously. We grow portentous and we fulminate. The great and strong wind rends the Church. The fire consumes it. The earthquake shakes it. The still small voice is not often heard.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH AND THE OUTSIDER

"He drew a circle that shut me out,
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love, and I had the wit to win;
We drew a circle and took him in."

"A man may be more decisively the servant of God and goodness, while doubting His existence and in the anguish of his soul crying for light, than resting in a common creed and coldly serving Him."

F. W. Robertson.

FOUR per cent of the population of Birmingham is on the electoral rolls of the Church of England. The percentage in other great industrial areas is not very much larger. It is evident that the problem of any Church that aims at expansion is the problem of the outsider.

The outsider is visualised by the Church in a variety of ways, sometimes with exaggeration and distortion. He is prayed over, sentimentalised over, anathematised, flattered, condemned as a sinner, magnified as a saint. I remember a discussion in a certain drawing-room in London where a number of parsons were assembled in conference on the subject of the outsider. Dick Sheppard and Studdert Kennedy were the principal protagonists. I can see Studdert Kennedy on one knee, holding on to a chair in front of him—forgetful of his attitude, as was his wont—pouring out his soul on the wickedness of the English villages. I can see Dick Sheppard, who had also left his place, standing over him and passionately defending the essential goodness of the human heart. Here were two attitudes to the outsider

—one saw him as desperately in need of what the Church might give—the other as capable of giving to the Church what the Church might desperately need.

It will be convenient if we consider the outsider from both these points of view, recognising, as the protagonists themselves did, that they are complementary to one another. I have no sympathy with the line that is often taken that the Church as an institution has nowadays nothing to give. It is still the great vehicle through which is preached the Gospel of the loving kindness of God, and, if the Church as we know it was to disappear through mismanagement or persecution, the Gospel would rapidly create another institution to take its place. So long as the faith remains—embedded in her liturgy and teaching and in the lives of her members—that God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, the Church has something to offer to a perplexed and wandering world. Further, it has an ideal of character and conduct, a sense of human relationship, a rule of life, a devotional and sacramental equipment, which minister to human need and provide the raw materials for the shaping of a life lived in conscious fellowship with God and Man. This is no small contribution, and the Church has no reason to stand empty-handed in the presence of the outsider. The dark shadows in human life, the strange intractability of human nature, its romance and suffering, its eternal questioning, its search for moral power are all the concern of the Church. Throughout the ages it has tried to shape its answer, to marshal its experience, and to set forth Christ as the revelation which brings light into the dark places of the world.

There are other things, too, (I do not say on a lower level, but of a different order) for which the Church stands and of which the outsider, if he is serious in his thinking, must take some note. There is, for example, the recognition of fellowship and the principle of co-operation. Quite recently I met a man—an officer, a Church of England “outsider”

—whose mind seemed to be in an extraordinary jumble. Since, however, the minds of so many interesting people are in an extraordinary jumble, that in itself is not significant, but the line he took in conversation was a curious one. "I like ritual and discipline, and the Church of Rome with its ceremonial is the church that appeals to me; but I could never stand anyone forgiving my sins. My Church is myself, and I never attend service." Here there seems to be a clash between the parade and ceremonial, dear to his heart as an army officer, and the individualism or Protestantism in which he had been brought up. The resultant decision, however, to go nowhere seems curiously inconsistent with the experience of one whose whole life had been lived in co-operation and fellowship with others. Why this isolation in religion in the face of his army experience? Why this aloofness in the case of multitudes of men of goodwill, artisans and merchants, Trade Unionists and members of Employers' Federations, who know that fellowship and co-operation is essential for the success of any human enterprise?

No doubt the genius of Protestantism is partly responsible for the attitude. The alternative to having the soul "managed" was to treat religion as a private affair between oneself and God, and the importance of fellowship either as a means of getting into closer contact with God or providing expression work for religion dropped out of sight.

I believe there are a great number of people, whose minds are not much affected by the more serious difficulties of which I shall speak later, who are lost to Church membership because the value of fellowship is not appreciated. It is amazing how little the popular socialism of our day has affected the outsider's thoughts of religion. I rarely get a satisfactory answer from my friends of the Labour Party, when I ask those, whose minds are essentially religious, why they do not come in and help to make the Church better. Strangely enough, I constantly find them employing

the same arguments with their own discontented members, who threaten to join the Communists, as I use with people whom I find on the fringe of the Church. "If you stay out, how can you expect the Labour Party to be reformed as you desire it? If you throw up the sponge and refuse our fellowship, how can we make any progress at all?" But they do not see how the same arguments apply to their own relationships with the Church.

The offer of fellowship, which the Church makes, is not one to be lightly set aside by people of good will. Nothing on a large scale for the welfare of mankind can be accomplished without it. If the Church can be regarded in any sense as the society of people, whose primary business it is to express the spirit of Jesus in the world, to stand outside it requires more justification than many people are able to give. Laziness, the fear of committing oneself, the hesitation to make a plan or to arrive at a view point are reasons not of a very high order which keep many out of the fellowship. Meantime, they often suffer through waste or deterioration of their own good nature, through lack of habit in their religion, and through loss of contact with others of stronger faith or deeper experience than their own. Many such whom I know remain exceedingly kind and generous friends and neighbours, but their eyes are on the ground in front of them. The larger purposes of God for mankind, the far horizons of a civilisation made Christian or a world unified in the name of Christ are not seen, nor are these aims active or dynamic in their lives.

But so far we have proceeded within narrow limits. The answer, which the man of good will (who is not morally inert), will immediately give to this plea that the Church has something to give, is that the gift or the offer is so mixed up with things of doubtful value, the Church itself is so glaringly indifferent to its own ideals and its services so unhelpful to people on the fringe that on the whole they prefer to remain as they are. There

is the added difficulty that they are asked to profess faith in more than they believe and to endorse by their association with the Church much of what they do not approve.

It must be confessed, I think, that the Church of England has never seriously faced these legitimate difficulties in its approach to the outsider. It has been content with small modifications in its services, a sort of indefinite intimation that the progress of science involves some modification of the Church's faith, and with the rather platitudinous defence that no society, even the best, ever lives up to its own ideals.

The difficulties in the way of removing these obstacles are very great. I remember, on one occasion, some forty of the best-known clergy of the Church of England meeting for two days to consider this question of the approach to the outsider. We got nowhere, and some of us left the conference with sore hearts. But I believe the difficulties are there to be overcome, and that the indefinite postponement of an attempt to overcome them is very damaging to religion and is fatal to any expansion of Church life.

Let us look at the intellectual difficulty first. We recite the creed, at every service, and most of us have grown so accustomed to make a mental adjustment at certain places that incongruities which are apparent to the outsider hardly strike us. We eliminate the literal meaning of the descent into Hell; we spiritualise the spatial terms in which our Lord's ascension into Heaven is described; we interpret the resurrection of the body to mean the continuance of personal identity after death. In some minds there is doubt of the historical evidence for the Virgin birth, in others doubt about the physical aspect of the resurrection and the resurgence of our Lord's body from the tomb. People who have acquired the habit of Church-going and who love the experience of spiritual life, which is bound up with its ministry of the word and sacraments, have probably solved in some way these difficulties for themselves. They accept the historic faith in its general implications, they merge

their own doubts in the general faith of the congregation, they suppress their own individuality, they wait for better times. They have their own methods of both satisfying the intellectual side of their nature and continuing to enjoy through the Church services the glory of God revealed through Christ.

But it is not fair to ask the outsider, whose religious position is little different from that which I have described, to go through the same mental process of adjustment. I do not know that it is good for *any* of us to make as many mental adjustments as we have to do in the course of a church service, but for the vigorous mind, untrained in our Church apologetic, it is irksome and distasteful. If our invitation to the outsider to join us is a serious one, we ought to consider his convenience.

The suggestion that I would make is that a summary of the creed similar to the summary of the ten Commandments should be sanctioned for alternative use, and that further encouragement should be given to services resting on a simple credal basis to which the outsider could be freely invited. There are a great many people whose attitude to Christ is very similar to that of the early Christians before they formulated their faith in any kind of credal statement. I do not see how they are to be drawn into the richer and fuller experience of the Church, unless they are to be encouraged to grow up from the beginning within the fellowship of the Church which has been adapted to receive them. If I may use a missionary illustration, I would put it in this way, that our public services must be more adapted to the mixture of "Catechumens" and Communicants which we may expect at Matins or at Evensong. Already, to a large extent, our preaching has been adapted to the modern situation, and the more thoughtful of our preachers do not always assume a formulated faith on the part of their hearers. They begin nearer the standpoint of the preaching of Jesus Himself, and seek to

establish stepping stones by which the mind may pass over to the established tenets of the Christian faith. But the services are less elastic than the preaching, and there are too many fences for the sincere inquirer to leap over before he reaches the pulpit.

The reply that such a man need not take any personal part in the service, need not kneel down for the prayers, need not stand for the Creed, need not sing the theology of Hymns Ancient and Modern carries with it its own refutation. It cannot decently be done, and, even if it could be done, it is not desirable that it *should* be done. There are already a quite sufficient number of people who have so acclimatised themselves to accepting passively whatever the Prayer Book or the hymn book offers them, and we do not want to add to their number. Far rather would we bring in people who will challenge the intellectual and spiritual character of the fare which is provided for them. We need a touch of modern realism.

An immense service is being rendered to the whole Church by men like the Bishop of Birmingham, who are seriously attempting to meet the intellectual difficulties of the outsider as he turns wistfully to Christianity and is perplexed by much that he finds in the Church of England. Dr. Barnes will go down to history as the Bishop who never forgot the outsider in his preaching, and tried to give him a helping hand to lift him nearer to Christ in Whom is to be found the fullness of God's revelation to mankind. If he has received malediction from some within the Church, many on the fringes will arise and call him blessed. But much of his preaching, and that of others who belong to his school of thought, must seem to devoted Church people of uncritical mind to be a misfit in the services to which they are accustomed. The solution is not, as some would desire, to close the mouth of the Bishop but to remove the incongruities in the services where he preaches, so that the outsider may experience the full effect of his message in a setting

properly adapted to the occasion. We cannot afford to have the men, who are engaged in redeeming the Church's honour where the outsider is concerned, hampered in the discharge of their service to the truth.

I turn now to the second obstacle in the way of the outsider which I have stated in the aggressive form in which it is sometimes presented—the glaring indifference of the Church to its own ideals. There was a time when any apologist might have taken up the task of defence with a heavy heart. Before the beginning of the great missionary enterprises of the nineteenth century there was a glaring indifference to the command “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel,” but it cannot be said that we are now wholly indifferent to that ideal. In the days of the Industrial Revolution, the Church showed a glaring indifference to the rights of human personality, but we cannot be said to be wholly indifferent now to the abolition of the slums, the care of children or the management of industry in the interests of those who take part in it. More serious is the slur that lies still on the Church for its indifference to the cause of Peace. Its failure to make any effective protest against the slaughter of the Great War or to create any definite moral breakwater through its members against the recurrence of such a war has damaged the Church as an institution in the eyes of multitudes of disillusioned working men and women. The resentment, which they feel against the state of Society in general that made the war possible, and against themselves for being swept off their feet to support or tolerate it is turned against the Church by a process familiar to psychologists. In scourging the Church they are vicariously scourging themselves and their own labour organisations, which failed quite as completely as the Church to live up to their principles and ideals.

But the recognition of this psychological process in the attitude of the outsider does not help the Church very much. Inasmuch as Christ is a greater force in the world's history

than either Karl Marx or the Co-operative Commonwealth, more might naturally be expected from his followers. A glaring inconsistency remains between "Blessed are those who make Peace" and "Blessed are those who condone war."

There are two ways in which the Church may seek to win the outsider who is kept out by his feeling of moral resentment on the subject of war. Either the Church may adopt the full pacifist position at once or it may explain clearly and courageously its doctrine of a Kingdom of God—gradually and progressively set up in the world of men by a series of conquests won by the Spirit of Christ revealed to each succeeding generation. Following upon this explanation, must be set forth explicitly the next instalment in relation to the achievement of world peace which the Church will seek to secure at any cost to itself. A strong case can be made out for either line of action.

During the recent Birmingham Crusade (the greatest inter-denominational witness for the Christian religion which one of our cities has yet attempted), a strong, impassioned and closely reasoned speech was made by the Rev. Leyton Richards on behalf of the full pacifist position. There were some who felt vaguely irritated by its uncompromising character, and by what seemed to them a certain lack of proportion. But Mr. Richards had his reward, which I happened to witness in the ante-room after the public meeting was over. I saw a prominent and highly respected member of the Labour movement approach him and say: "Henceforth I return to the Church. I left it because of its attitude to the war, but now I come back."

I cannot myself adopt what is called the full pacifist position. I do not read the historical development of Christianity in quite the same light, I think, as a pacifist does. I do not think he always makes the best of his case in winning people to believe in peace and when I come to the subject of "witness" I will try to make this clear. But infinitely preferable is any "excess" in the pacifist's speech or aim

than the undefined invertebrate attitude of modified goodwill which is characteristic of the ordinary churchman. The outsider is perfectly justified in hesitating to throw in his lot with *that*! It would evaporate with the first change of public opinion; it would perish at the first appearance of a hostile Press. The first sound of the drums and fifes in the streets would announce its military funeral.

If we really believe in the doctrine of immediate and ultimate objectives where the coming of the kingdom of God is concerned, we need to provide for ourselves a sharp and clear-cut aim for the immediate future which we intend to achieve at any cost to ourselves. The pacifist who suffered in the war has achieved a moral authority through his suffering, whatever may be the current verdict on his sense of citizenship. Moral authority is inalienably bound up with the capacity to suffer. The Cross is the supreme example.

What step can the Church take to show that it is sincere in the pursuit of the ideal of peace and which will involve an element of risk or cost? I do not know that the particular step matters supremely, provided that it makes a slack rope taut and compels the Church to take the strain in the "Tug-of-Peace" that is coming. It has been suggested that the Church should solemnly pledge itself to refuse to be allied in any way whatever with a Government which has not submitted its case to arbitration. That is good as far as it goes, but, since the signing of the optional clause, it is difficult to see how *any* ordinary citizen could support a Government which had evaded such a responsibility.

It would, perhaps, be more to the point to consider first at what point the Church should refuse to support the use of armed forces in India or Egypt without submission of the case to independent arbitration, or what should be the Church's attitude in this country, in case, for example, Italy should go to war with France. Would we, in the latter case, be prepared to endorse the sending of munitions to either party in the dispute? Or would we

be prepared to sanction the various ways by which neutral countries can lose their soul and enrich their pockets through the trade of war?

It has been said authoritatively that, if England had made up her mind about supporting France in case of aggression four years before and had frankly told Germany its intentions, there would have been no war. If the Church would make up its mind and let the nation and Government know what it would do in certain eventualities, in many cases the eventualities would not arise. If they did arise and the Church stood by its word and suffered accordingly, there would at least be an end to the charge that the ideals of the Church are in glaring contrast with its practice.

I have dealt briefly with the most obvious inconsistency of the Church which repels the outsider. There are others of which I cannot now treat, but of which we are increasingly conscious. Take, for example, the failure of the Church to secure an appreciably higher standard of idealism in business on the part of its members, and its neglect of its own young people in subordinate positions, who try to live up to their Christian principles and who are constantly losing their jobs on account of their efforts. The impotence of the Church in both these directions rankles, and the feeling of having been "let down" by the Christian society becomes a personal grievance. I only know of one congregation where a systematic attempt is made to stand by its young people who suffer in their business life, because they refuse to tell lies or to give or to accept secret commissions. If our Church life were really filled with a spirit of Christian fellowship, if the sacramental bond which is supposed to unite us were really an effective one, the whole moral and economic force of the Church would be behind these people.

When I go round the great wholesale markets of Birmingham where men work in surroundings less attractive even than Covent Garden, I find a spirit of comradeship which is lacking in our Church life. If a man has taken a "bad

knock"—an illness in the family or an unexpected loss—if for the moment he is down and out, there is always a "whip round" to put him on his feet again. Here is an element in primitive Christianity which is more vigorously at work outside than inside the Church. We stand convicted by comparison.

It is only by gradual restoration of the original beauty of Church life—where membership in the community counted for more than the family bond—that we can hope to dispel the apathy of the outsider to institutional religion. Here, again, as in the case of our attitude to Peace, it is a question of "How much do you really care?" that is constantly presented to us by the outsider. "What do your ideals cost you? What is your 'Fellowship' worth in pounds, shillings and pence to those of your members who are down and out? What is this sacramental fellowship which you enjoy with one another in terms of good comradeship and practical sympathy?" When we are on the way to give a satisfactory answer to these questions, we shall be on the way to breaking down one of the moral barriers which separate us from many people of goodwill.

It may seem a comparatively small matter to deal with the third of the complaints which I have instanced, after the intellectual and moral discussion which has preceded it. But the "unhelpfulness" of the services has a place in the mind of some outsiders with whom the intellectual or the moral difficulty does not exist or for whom it has been satisfactorily met. The difference in education, culture, predisposition of that great mass of people whom we visualise as outsiders makes it impossible to attempt any kind of classification of their reactions to the Church. The intellectual difficulties which seem so serious to one man are brushed aside by another man of equal culture. "Of course," he says, "the Church's real teaching must be in advance of its written formularies, why bother about the exact wording of the Creed or the Articles?"

Or again the moral failure of the Church to live up to its own idealism, which seems such a flagrant offence to the "serious" person, is brushed aside by another whose reading of history has made him familiar with the inevitable gap which is always to be found between idealism and practice. "The wonder is," he says, "considering the length of time you have been at work, that the Church shows such reforming and recuperative power. Of course, there are abuses, but apparently the Church is getting rid of them. Why make things more difficult?"

Thus there remains the person who may have reconciled himself intellectually or morally with the Church but whose æsthetic or spiritual sensibilities keep him outside of it or on its fringes. He has a claim to consideration for quite different reasons, and it is he (or she) who often makes the quiet remark that "the services are so unhelpful."

I cannot myself easily imagine anyone on these grounds alone standing aside from Church connection. It is possible to elevate or to exalt personal preference beyond what is reasonable. To abstain from actual membership in the Church because the parson has a bad voice or there is too much or too little variety in the services seems to be individualism gone mad. The recollection that all human beings, even parsons, have their defects, that there is no ultimate standard of taste and no uniform method of providing that a service shall be helpful in an equal degree to all who take part in it, should modify any temporary feeling of resentment. Many of the clergy, and still more of Nonconformist ministers, have bad tools to work with. There are buildings whose depressing character can only be forgotten by a special outpouring of divine grace. There are choirs whose disintegration without their reintegration is demanded by both heaven and earth. There are old traditions of uniformity both in the Free Church and the Church of England which bind the "paying" members of the congregation under an evil spell. There is the not

unfamiliar money difficulty when it becomes a question of giving more "colour" to the organ or new hymn books to the congregation. To provide for æsthetic or spiritual wants of diverse humanity is not an easy task for the average man with average equipment. It is scarcely to be wondered at if his temper gets a little short, and if he murmurs under his breath: "It is not only services but human beings who can also be 'unhelpful.'"

Nevertheless, the inevitable "But" must be forthcoming. The fact remains that the services *could* be made more helpful in spite of the limitations enumerated above if wider latitude was given by authority to experiment. Matins and Evensong are too like one another to be used with advantage by the same congregation on the same day. In our large industrial areas only a handful of people attend Matins. Something in the nature of an Adult Meeting, an old fashioned Prayer Meeting, a hymn practice, or a Quaker meeting might replace it. Evensong is, perhaps, the least criticised of the Church's services. Its structure is admirable if reasonable latitude is allowed, so that in the choice of Psalms and Lessons and in the introduction of special prayers, a sense of unity is achieved, and a motif kept before the mind. My own experience is that it is often improved by concentration on one Lesson rather than on two, and that a few words of explanation at the beginning of the service suggesting the main thought for the evening adds greatly to its subsequent enjoyment.

In many churches much could be done to meet the spiritual needs of special groups of people after evening service. Where such special services of intercession or of music, or of teaching form part of the evening programme, it is important that the preceding "Evensong and Sermon" should be of a manageable length. There is room, I think, for a far more effective use of Silence in our services, and for the provision of times of reflection at certain moments. The Voluntary after the sermon common in many Nonconformist Churches has both spiritual

and æsthetic justification. The clatter of coins and the inrush of thoughts proper to the collection, which follows the sermon in most of our Church of England Churches, might well be postponed to a decent interval after the delivery of the message.

None of these suggestions may, in themselves, be of the first importance, but what is of the first and last importance—is that every worshipper coming to the church should feel that the service has been thought out beforehand, that the minister who takes it comes in a spirit of prayer and expectancy, and that all who are to help him—choir, sidesmen, lay readers and vergers—are inspired by something nobler than the spirit of routine. There must be a unity of spiritual purpose from the west door to the east end. Where that is achieved the outsider who comes to the service is not likely to complain of its “unhelpfulness.” He is more likely to say: “Surely, the Lord is in this place.”

CHAPTER V

LESSONS FROM THE BIRMINGHAM CRUSADE

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, who worketh all in all."
1 Cor. xiv. 4-6

Lambeth Conference: Resolution No. 46¹

Meanwhile the Conference urges the desirability of organising and participating in efforts of Evangelism in co-operation with Christians of other Communions, both as a means of bearing effective witness to the multitudes who are detached from all forms of organised Christianity, and as a means of expressing and strengthening that sense of unity in the Gospel which binds together in spiritual fellowship those who own allegiance to different Churches.

(1 Cor. iv. 4-6.)

DURING the month of May, 1930, a ten days' religious Crusade of a remarkable character was conducted in Birmingham. The particular spirit which inspired it and certain features in its organisation are of far more than local interest. Certain aspects of the Church's "problem" in approaching the outsider are so well illustrated by it that I propose to try and analyse its lessons for the Church at large. It will bring before us a somewhat different and more attractive picture of the Church than in the last chapter. We shall see a Church already recognising the larger Church which is to be, and going into action as a united force. So far we have considered the Church in its passive aspect. We have seen how it may prepare a welcome for the visitor

¹ This chapter was written before the publication of the Lambeth Report. The Resolution quoted above exactly corresponds with what was done in the Crusade.

and meet his intellectual and spiritual needs on arrival. The study of the Birmingham Crusade will suggest how the Church may go out actively to meet the outsider and indicate the lines on which it may reasonably hope to be successful in reaching him.

The points that are of special interest for our purpose are:

- (1) The effect on Church life of united action.
- (2) The effect on the City of corporate witness.
- (3) The inferences for the future that may be drawn.

The Crusade was organised by a joint Council fully representative of the Church of England and Free Churches under the auspices of the Industrial Christian Fellowship. Its interdenominational character was recognised from the start. There was complete unanimity amongst those who were inspired by the idea of witnessing to their Christian faith, that nothing but *united* witness, so far as it could be had, was of any practical use. There was no hope of official co-operation with the Roman Church, but outside that communion the organisers were successful in securing valuable help from members of the Society of Friends and from the Salvation Army. As was natural in an experiment of this kind, never attempted on such a scale before, the working out of a basis which would be widely acceptable to the Church of England in Birmingham, to the co-operating Free Churches, and to the Headquarters in London of the Industrial Christian Fellowship gave much anxious thought. There were times when it seemed as if a deadlock had been reached, but, eventually, guided in a very wonderful way by the Spirit of God, the following basis was accepted by all concerned:

- (1) That the Crusade syllabus (of the Industrial Christian Fellowship) shall be taken as the agreed doctrinal basis with such modifications as may be recommended

by the I.C.F. to meet the needs of an Interdenominational Crusade.

- (2) That all denominations, societies and individuals accepting this basis shall be free to take part in the organisation and work of the Crusade.
- (3) That no modifications of their particular habits or customs be expected from the individual Churches taking part in the Crusade, but that in the conduct and preaching of the Crusade we shall all endeavour not to wound one another's consciences, but to stress the things on which we are agreed and give a united witness for our Lord.
- (4) That United Prayer and Worship shall be regarded as an essential part of the preparation for and carrying through of the Crusade, but this does not necessarily involve Intercommunion or Exchange of Pulpits.
- (5) That information be given and, so far as possible, co-operation established with others who may desire to work on similar lines 'simultaneously with the Crusade.

The basis is worthy of close examination, inasmuch as it worked very satisfactorily and may be of service for similar undertakings elsewhere. A few comments may bring out certain salient points. It will be noted that all questions as to whether such and such a Church or congregation should be asked to join the Crusade was avoided. Once the basis was adopted, it was left to each Church to decide such a question for itself. The interpretation of the basis was left to private judgment. Sacramental teaching was not excluded. No irritating kind of "guarantee" was inserted, but a general declaration of a steadfast intention not to wound one another's consciences. The attitude to interchange of pulpits and intercommunion is very striking. It would have been quite impossible to condemn them or to forbid them categorically.

Many of those who took part in the Crusade were quite accustomed to preach in Nonconformist churches and to welcome Nonconformists to preach in their own. Many also were pledged to work for some measure of intercommunion at the earliest possible moment. It would, therefore, have been quite unsuitable to foreclose what might be possible later on in any basis which might be taken as a subsequent model; all concerned were anxious to avoid the appearance of the Crusade being used as propaganda by any particular party. Hence the words "not necessarily" (in No. 4), which meant, in fact, that on this particular Crusade—the time not being ripe—neither intercommunion nor interchange of pulpits was officially arranged. The clause, providing that every Church should be at liberty to follow its own customs, was intended to have a special bearing upon the Birmingham situation, where certain churches have customs and practices not sanctioned by the Bishop. In its practical working, it meant that none of the so-called "rebel churches" were to be excluded from the Crusade. It is significant that the whole basis, including this particular clause, received the approval of the Bishop.

This basis which left so much to general goodwill was worked with complete sympathy and mutual understanding, and on it a powerful organisation filled with the Crusading Spirit was set up. It was much to be regretted that, in spite of all the efforts that were made behind the scenes, the greater number of the "rebel churches" remained outside the movement; but otherwise the Crusade was fully representative of Anglo-Catholic, Liberal and Evangelical thought within the Church of England and of all the great denominations within the Free Church Federation.

The effect upon our mutual church life in Birmingham has been apparent in many ways. Mutual understanding has grown and joint action on questions of moral importance for the city has been easily and effectively arranged. We

introduced a novel idea into the structure of this Crusade by arranging with the I.C.F. that properly trained local Crusaders, both men and women, should take part with the I.C.F. agents and other visitors in the Crusade itself. The work of preparation was pursued not separately by denominations, but jointly, as a kind of foretaste of that happy time when the larger Church should come into being. United prayer and worship followed such discussion classes, and the corporate fellowship was sustained by growing fellowship with Christ. More and more the doctrine of "the common mind" came to be the accepted ideal in working out the plan of action. There was no thought of arriving at decisions by the clumsy and sometimes brutal method of majority voting. Perhaps the presence of Quakers on our committees helped us to realise more fully than we would otherwise have done that, where there is a "concern" about a matter, light and guidance is sure to follow.

Undoubtedly, we were in a specially advantageous position in Birmingham for this great venture. The spirit of co-operation had been growing for some years, largely fostered, as it will be generally admitted, by the Anglican Evangelical Group movement which is strongly represented in the city. Its policy of throwing open its annual regional conference to Free Churchmen and giving them full rights of membership had prepared the way for larger and more far-reaching co-operation. In particular, the Conference arranged in 1929 on "The Church and Civic Life" had opened up the way for interesting the city in Church affairs and made the subsequent remarkable civic developments of the Crusade possible.

And here, perhaps, I may pass on to the second chapter of my story—the effect of the Crusade on the life of the city. The official recognition accorded to it was generous and sympathetic to a degree. I believe there are few cities in England where organised religion will not be welcomed and given a fair chance, if it comes not in a sectarian but

in an interdenominational form. Interdenominationalism is the breeding ground of the new kind of catholicity which the future holds, and the lay mind is quick to appreciate it and to welcome it. I could supply instance after instance of closed doors readily opened—of civic opportunities provided for the Gospel in response to the appeal “In this matter the churches are acting together—Can you not help us?” If things can be done in Birmingham (with its sectarian and in some respects secular traditions), under the *ægis* of this new Catholicism, how much more could be attempted elsewhere where the stream of church and civic life has more easily blended.

I shall always recall as one of the great days of my ministry the opening night of the Crusade, when the converging processions from either end of the city, one headed by the Bishop of the diocese, the other by the President of the Free Church Council, arrived at the Town Hall, filled it, crowded it and overflowed it in a few minutes. There the Lord Mayor was waiting to receive them, and to express the city's welcome to organised religion.

It was not my lot to take part in that historic gathering. My place was with the great crowd outside, which, with the goodwill of the civic authorities, was allowed to hold an overflow meeting round the famous steps of Chamberlain Square. I do not know the last occasion on which a religious overflow meeting was held on this spot or whether there was any precedent. But I do know that the Lord Mayor, after making his speech in the Town Hall, found his way through the crowds to speak from the platform, which we had hastily erected in the square, and created a new precedent in Mayoral activities for the city of Birmingham.

The Press, which is quick to recognise when anything is about to strike the popular imagination, devoted columns daily to the report of the series of public meetings, to the work on the open-air pitches, and to the special series of sectional conferences held during the Crusade. Religion,

largely because of the catholicity attaching to it, had become interesting and attractive to the outsider, and the Press recognised the fact. In most cases, if the editing and summarising had been done by a religious journalistic expert, it could not have been done better. There were exceptions of course, where sensationalism got the better of fact. The poster of an enterprising journal, which met my eye one morning, seemed to be a little exaggerated, though the intention was good: "Hot Gospellers Conquer Birmingham!" There were many stout Anglicans in our ranks who must have squirmed to see themselves described under the old Cromwellian phrase of "Hot Gospellers." There were others amongst us who smiled to think how easily "Conquest" could be assigned to us in the Press, when we knew well in our hearts that all we could expect to do in the Crusade was to make a beginning not of conquest but of witness. But thank God for the humour that lightens up even the path of a Crusader!

The effect upon the Labour Movement in the City was particularly interesting to watch. Many of its members who served on our committees found themselves at first in a dubious position. The record of the Church in relation to the long struggle of Trade Unionism for recognition and power is not a very sympathetic one. Labour is inclined to think that by its own right hand and by its own arm alone it has achieved its present position, and that it owes nothing whatever to the Church. There is no place where the glaring failure of the Church to live up to its own ideals is pointed out with more rugged plainness than at a Labour meeting. At first the usual accusation of "dope" was forthcoming, and wild stories were circulated in some parts of the city that the real aim of the Crusade was to recommend patch-work repairing of the slums rather than genuine Slum Clearance.

The situation, however, began to clear when the editor of the Labour paper addressed an open letter in its columns

to the Clergy and Ministers engaged in the Crusade, and threw the paper open for an official reply. The reply produced a good impression, and the appeal to let bygones be bygones was not without effect. The value of some form of Christianity was never in dispute; it was rather the Church's right to speak on behalf of Christ which was questioned. To some extent the tables were turned by a bold offer on behalf of the Crusade Executive to send one of their number to meet the Trades and Labour Council, to explain the Crusade message and to stand any "heckling" which might follow. Such a challenge is dear to the heart of the working man, and it was difficult to refuse it. The right of every man to state his case and the right of every other man to cross-examine him on it is a postulate of the Labour movement. The result was that, after some hesitation, the challenge was accepted, and a large meeting assembled at which the accredited representative of the Crusade Executive explained with complete frankness both the spiritual and social side of the Crusade message, and "stood up" to the heckling which followed. The proceedings were conducted by the chairman with a scrupulous sense of fair play. The audience itself was quick to respond, and gibes on the part of a few Communists present were resented and suppressed. In the end nothing but goodwill remained; the visitor was cordially thanked for his visit and for his statement of the aims of the Crusade. Henceforth any thought of official opposition was at an end. A new feeling of sympathy was created, and the position of members of our Committee, who happened to be engaged in Labour politics, was immensely strengthened.

It is not my purpose to tell the story of the Crusade, thrilling as that might be, else I would stop to pay a tribute to the gallant band that came, under the auspices of the I.C.F. and under the leadership of the Bishop of Croydon and Dr. Herbert Gray, to work in the factories, on the open-air pitches, and in the parks during the ten days of

the Crusade. I am studying it from the point of view of one who believes in the larger Church of the future and who sees in the Crusade an indication of the way in which the spiritual life of the Church might be renewed and the barriers between itself and the outsider disappear.

These are really the inferences to be drawn: larger unity as a practical possibility, increased spiritual opportunity as the result.

There are some who feel that a Crusade of this kind comes and goes like a ripple on the ocean, and that, in the end, as things have been they remain. Church life and civic life go on much as before, and the actual number of the outsiders is not much reduced.

I think it is a superficial view which surrounds all movements of this kind, as they recede into the past, with the halo of failure. The Crusading efforts of the present are built upon the mission efforts of the past. Each generation succeeds to a heritage which has been fertilised and tilled, watered and cultivated in its own particular way by the one which has preceded it. Few stop to think how dull Church life would be without its missions or pilgrimages, its retreats or Crusades. The soul craves for a touch of colour, for some warmth of spiritual adventure. It is not altogether concerned with results, but results come in psychical changes within the soul itself, and a gradual change in the environment within which the spiritual venture is planned and carried out.

No better testimony to the value of the Crusading spirit can be quoted than that of Mr. Joad, no very friendly critic of institutional religion. He sees quite clearly that without it life becomes morally meaningless. It might be a convinced Christian who is giving his advice to the younger generation: "This, then, is the task of religion in the modern world, to capture the imaginations of young men and women, as the Bolsheviks have captured them in Russia, and the Fascists in Italy; to harness their energies and to utilise

their enthusiasms, to find expression, in a word, for the political impulse as Communism and Fascism have succeeded in expressing it, but to do these things, not for ends that are harmful, but in the service of what is socially and politically good. To translate into old-fashioned terminology, religion must make of our duty towards our neighbour an instrument to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth."

From my point of view, however, the Birmingham Crusade stands out not merely as one of many attempts to harness the Crusading spirit to the service of mankind, but as the herald of such crusading adventures as the larger Church might imitate and undertake. The recognition of a common basis, the completely interdenominational character of its structure, the pooling of thought and experience in the literature produced and in the message delivered during the Crusade, indicated the great spiritual possibilities of the future. I felt that in a real sense we were acting, even within the necessary limits prescribed, as representatives of a united Church, which had suddenly come into being. The City, too, seemed to look at the Crusade in this way. For a moment a national Church worthy of the name was at work in its midst, demanding recognition in the name of Christ for the message it was charged to deliver, asserting its presence in unexpected quarters, boldly, good-humouredly, persistently, preaching Christ, and speaking authoritatively for the Church on matters of moral and social consequence for the citizens. This demonstration commanded respect. There was more than a hint that it meant business. The resolution passed with uplifted hands at the great public meeting on The Scandal of the Slums was not, as formerly, a mere pious resolution, but one which a great commercial city could appreciate and understand. "We record our solemn protest against the unchristian conditions under which so many of our fellow citizens live in the slums of Birmingham. We recognise frankly our share of the blame. We pledge ourselves in the name of Christ to do what lies

in our power, *and to face the cost involved*, to secure the removal of this blot upon the fame of the city to which we are proud to belong."

Here was a glimpse of Christianity in action, with a united backing behind it, which is the first glimpse that the outsider wants to see of the Catholic Church.

It was beyond our powers or the terms of our commission to do more than carry out this reconnaissance in the name of the Church in Birmingham. But, if a series of such reconnaissances were carried out in the cities of England, the relation of the outsider to the Church would be completely transformed and the rebirth of the National Church would be brought appreciably nearer. The moral effect of a United Church constantly striving to come into being, acting as if it existed wherever and whenever possible, would gradually force the solution of the traditional barriers which keep us apart. The flood tide of vital experience, of new fellowship and of new power would burst any dam that human perversity had created in the past.

We want more of those dramatic scenes, with which the Crusade closed, throughout England, if we are to create widespread expectation of the rebirth of the National Church. I may well conclude this chapter with our final act of witness. Out of the Town Hall at ten o'clock on the evening of Monday, June 2nd, the great crowd surged and formed in orderly procession, headed by the Bishop of the Diocese and leading Free Churchmen. They were marching to the Bull Ring, to which all processions make their way, for the Bull Ring is on the Mars Hill of Birmingham, where all may speak and every demonstration in turn may take possession of the City. But the hour was unique, the concourse of Christian people unprecedented, and the purpose novel and strange. The Bishop was going to bless the City and with him was a United Church. There beneath the shadow of the Parish Church (where bells had once rung out to drown the voice of John Wesley preaching

in the Bull Ring), surrounded by Anglicans of every type, and Free Churchmen of varied denominations, in the presence of "Outsiders" amazed to see the Church flow over and submerge the place so often occupied by secularists, the Blessing was given in a great stillness. Many went to their homes saying "What hath God wrought? We never saw it in this fashion." But others of us went saying "Why *should* we not see it in this fashion? What is there God could not do if only His Church would let Him?"

PART TWO

CHAPTER VI

THE LAMBETH REPORT—CREATIVE PRINCIPLES

"It is possible for the Church to achieve unity by shaking off her negations and throwing herself upon Christ, and for that Church to teem with all the peoples of Christendom and to possess their hearts in freedom; possible for the sins of the world to be healed and its vast miseries assuaged, for the oppressed to be set free, for Labour to follow the Carpenter and Capital to kneel before the King: possible for the common life of men to be lived in health and charity and peace, for every parish church to be a home kindled into love and beauty, and girt about with habitations from which cruelty and ugliness and disease have passed away: possible for charity to prevail, for faith to be reborn, and for hope to flame over the world. Only, first it is necessary that those who already believe in Christ should love one another."

Percy Dearmer.

So far the expanding Church and its relation to the outsider. At this point (where I am writing in the little village of St. Cergue above Geneva), the Lambeth Report arrives, as someone says, to scatter or consolidate my dreams. As a matter of fact it does neither, but, as is the way with Lambeth Reports—with great caution and an occasional touch of genius—it opens the way to wider horizons. It does not blot out the panorama which stretches before my view from the Jungfrau to the Grand Massif. Perhaps it even brings the Diablerets more plainly into view! But it fills the valleys with mists, and only the higher peaks remain in the sunlight.

It is well to recall the limitations of the Lambeth Conference in order to check the first feelings of disappointment, and to secure for it a sympathetic judgment. There

is no pretence of unanimity amongst the Bishops with regard to many vital questions, yet in the interest of the Church at large it is assumed to be essential that as far as possible these three hundred Bishops should speak with one voice. It is a great achievement that so often their voices do really seem to blend as one, and we may, without insincerity, thank God for the large measure of agreement which has been reached. There is much that comes to us from the Report—without any undercurrent of qualification or retraction—which may serve as guidance to the clergy and laity of the Church of England and which may be regarded as clear gain. But all skilled observers know that in the Church of England unanimity and ambiguity have so far gone hand in hand, and it is not surprising to see that the unity of the Report is dependent in many places on its ambiguity.

I propose that, instead of collecting and recording my “first depressions” (as I have no doubt many others are doing who cherish particular ideals for the Church), I should begin by setting out the vital principles which seem to emerge from the Report and which offer constructive hope for the future. This is a more hopeful task than to dwell upon the hesitations or the negativisms, which are bound up with so conservative an institution as the Church. Who troubles very much about the cocoon provided in due time it produces the chrysalis? It is the *direction* in which the Church is moving which matters, and here I think there is encouragement to be found for those who seek the larger life of the Church and desire to make it a spiritual home for numbers now outside its borders. Criticism can be postponed to a later chapter. These emerging principles deserve our gratitude.

I would put first in this noble category the official recognition that “nothing about the character of God is to be believed by Christian people which does not fit the character of Jesus Christ.” These words from Resolution No. 3

are a vindication of the personal efforts, which so many of us have made, to clear the character of God as taught by the Church in the eyes of the outsider: "We would impress upon Christian people the necessity of banishing from their minds ideas concerning the character of God which are inconsistent with the character of Jesus Christ." I do not think the full implications of this statement are as yet apprehended by any of us. It implies, for example, that the individual words and phrases of Jesus as reported to us in the Gospels should be closely integrated with His character. It is the character of Jesus rather than the individual word, or the detached phrase, which gives us our norm in thinking about God. The meaning of all words and phrases needs to be interpreted in the light of the character of the teacher. It is so with the words of Jesus the greatest of all Teachers. He Himself is their revising and integrating force. Not in His words as taken singly by themselves, but in His words as revealing His unique character do we see God and apprehend Him. It is the character, the Person of Jesus which is supreme.

This work of banishing from people's minds ideas of God that are not consistent with the character of Christ is work very closely related to bringing the outsider into living touch with the Church. The number of people who say "I cannot worship a God like that" and who imagine that the figment of their imagination corresponds with what the Church teaches about God is surprising. Many, whose faith in a God ruling the universe is entirely untouched by such reasoning as is to be found in Professor Lippman's *Preface to Morals*, are puzzled and perplexed in their unsophisticated way with what the Church seems to them to teach about Him. Passages in the Psalms make Him blood-thirsty, and even the revised Psalter still retains them. They get confused about natural disaster and moral punishments; they find some of the prayers in the Prayer Book add to their confusion. When drought comes they do not

think they have "worthily deserved a plague of rain and waters," nor when the crops fail do they think that they "justly suffer for their iniquity," and yet the Prayer Book seems to teach both. They are perplexed about the teaching so often given about sickness—that it is God's will for them—and resentful about the wrath of God as it may affect their children that are unbaptised.

The way out of all their difficulties for these honest simple folk is to point them to the character of Christ, and to tell them that God is like that. It is easy when once this primary principle is established to relieve their minds. Jesus rejected the idea that accidents came because of sin. Jesus was always driving sickness out of God's kingdom. Jesus did not accept early death as the will of God where it could be avoided. Jesus took the little children in His arms whether they were baptised or not. God is like Jesus seeking to cure the world of sin and sickness. He can be loved and trusted, and no "accident" of nature or church order can interfere with His love. He is as little likely to take revenge on anyone for neglect of Himself or to exaggerate the importance of technical points as Jesus was to revenge Himself or to adhere strictly to the traditions of the scribes. With such teaching these people can find peace.

There are others, too (for whom I am less qualified to speak), to whom renewed emphasis on the essential likeness of God and Jesus might mean much. I believe it is far easier to argue for the necessity of a redeeming God than for God in the abstract. It is the *nature* of God, not the existence of God, that really matters. The present apathy about God results not so much from disbelief in a First Cause as in a growing strangeness to His Presence and redeeming Power. "God is like Jesus" might easily point the way to a new kind of Christian apologetic, for, though men do not see their need of God in the abstract, they often see their own need of redemption in the concrete. The

Spirit of Jesus, remaking the broken bits of humanity, rebuilding broken hopes and shattered lives, assumes in the minds of those who experience its power the quality of the Divine. They deify the Spirit of Jesus and recover the God they had lost.

The second principle, which I see emerging from the Report, is that we are still growing into the mind of Christ, and that the Church which is to be will have a far wider and deeper understanding of Him than we have now. Take, for example, the words of Resolution 4 dealing with The Revelation of Christ:

“We anticipate that, when this same revelation possesses their minds, the nations of Asia and Africa will still further enrich the Church of Christ by characteristic statements of the permanent Gospel, and by characteristic examples of Christian virtue and types of Christian worship.

We welcome such unfolding of the truth of the Gospel as one of the ways by which the nations may bring their riches into the service of Christ and His Church.”

This is what we mean when we speak of Catholicity lying in the future rather than in the past. No Church at the present is adequate in its interpretation of Christianity. There is no finality. There is much to be outgrown, and the Report admits in the same Resolution that the Revelation of Christ, as we receive it through the Church to-day, is “not without some admixture of misunderstanding.” The idea of a Catholic faith kept perfectly pure throughout the ages, unmixed with alien elements, needing no developments and no purge, disappears as we read these pages. Our eyes are turned towards the future and we see the Churches of Asia and Africa contributing to the interpretation of Christ, and correcting, incidentally, much of our own interpretation which has been conditioned by our western civilisation.

Such a view of the Church makes its institutional character less rigid and severe, and allows us not only to ask young people to "accept the faith" of the Church but to accept the responsibility of bringing the faith of the Church to its full flower of perfection. There is a great field of exploration before the Church of Christ which seeks to grow more Catholic through the coming ages. Christianity is still "mewing its mighty youth" and destined to experience the changes and developments which are inseparable with growth.

I find no difficulty in meeting the cry "that we are dissatisfied with the Church." Neither its faith nor its practice are entirely satisfactory. Criticism of this kind can be disarmed by frankly admitting the truth that is in it, and recognising the element of reasonableness which may be the cause of the irritation expressed. We are *all* dissatisfied with the Church. It is the business of the Church to make us dissatisfied with itself. Within it burns the Revelation of God in Christ—too great, too holy a thing for any Church, as we know it, to present worthily in its faith and life and practice. Dissatisfaction is the condition of useful membership within any branch of the Catholic Church at the present time. There are apartments-to-let within the Church of England for any number of dissatisfied people who will bring their dissatisfaction to bear upon the old problem of how to make the Church more Christian. It is not too much to say that the future lies with dissatisfied people who—receiving Christ into their hearts—disturb the framework of their respective institutions, and shake the tenets of their own creeds. Out of them will come the Catholicity of the future. It is they who will stretch out hands to one another across the barriers of race and civilisation.

A third principle, which I see making its appearance in the report (though here the mists are very thick, and the true inwardness of the wording is not to be readily per-

ceived) is that Anglicanism exists to promote something wider and bigger than Anglicanism itself. If this is the true reading of the attitude of the Bishops to the South India Reunion scheme, then this Church of which I have been speaking in earlier chapters—"a Church other than Anglican, other than Rome" seems to have suddenly appeared on the episcopal horizon.

It will be necessary to discuss this attitude at some length in a later chapter, but for my purpose at present in seeking to discover in the Report emerging principles, which are intended to guide the Church in the future, I may quote the following words: First of all from Resolution 40 (c) which deals with the South India scheme:

"We hope that it will lead to the emergence of a part of the Body of Christ which will possess a new combination of the riches that are His."

Again, from the Encyclical Letter, page 27:

"The United Church in South India will not itself be an Anglican Church; it will be a distinct Province of the Universal Church."

I desire to separate this enunciation of what seems to be a new principle in the history of Anglicanism from the various questions of expediency, with which no doubt it was surrounded in the conference. It may have been that (in the eyes of many) it was the only way out of a difficult situation, and that it was far from being accepted on its merits. It may be that a far more difficult situation has been created and that the Anglican Communion, being what it is, has added to rather than reduced its own complications. Much depends on how the Anglican Community grows up during the next ten years to the situation, which has been created.

But the principle that Anglicanism is no longer a self-contained institution, multiplying Anglicanism throughout the world—that its business is to create independent indigenous Churches as the result of its missionary enterprise—is founded upon a growing appreciation of the meaning of Catholicity. Whatever may have been the circumstances which have led to this declaration, it is one to be welcomed as a great advance in Anglican thinking and practice. We are at least building upon a sound principle. As regards the future, the growing sense of Catholicity as something which all Churches have to achieve must in the end secure that the Anglican Church has suitable Christian relations with these new Churches.

If we look at the principle, we shall see how again the whole conception of the Church is widened in the areas where it is applied, and how it opens the way for genuine co-operative building. It has always been difficult for the English not to Englishify any place where they happened to be or any people they happened to govern. It has always been difficult for the Anglican Church in the Mission field not to aim at making its converts Anglicans. No one denies the strength that this insularity brings to the national character, but it is not always helpful in encouraging national self-expression or Catholic development. Now the way is opening for the recognition of a wider mission. The scandal of repeating in the mission field the mistakes we have made at home can disappear. Anglican, Congregationalist, Methodist and Baptist terminology need no longer differentiate the several Christian communities gathered by these efforts into the Catholic Church. Henceforth we need not labour under the imputation of creating Churches each in our own image. Our common task in the mission field becomes the creation of Christ's Church and its equipment for independent life.

There is a further consequence that follows from the acceptance of this principle which is vital to the cause of

Reunion. It disposes of the suspicion that absorption of other denominations is the goal of the Anglican Church in seeking Reunion. I am not surprised that the South India scheme has seemed perilously near to a scheme of absorption in the eyes of many Nonconformists in this country. The overwhelming stress laid upon episcopacy and the constant modifications of the scheme as the result of its siftings through the sieve of the Anglo-Catholic mind, have aroused the feeling in certain quarters that reunion and the extension of Anglicanism were intended to be one and the same thing. Whatever difficulties may lie before us in adjusting the attitude of our own divided Anglicanism to this new branch of the Catholic Church, it is important that all concerned should be able to talk of it as *new*, and not as the extension of one or other denomination in some form of specious disguise.

The adoption of this principle in working out reunion is the exact opposite of that proposed by the Roman Church, which offers only the way of conversion to individuals and of absorption to corporate bodies. In recognising our partnership with others, in creating a Church no longer strictly Anglican, we are turning our back upon the doctrine of submission and advancing in the way of fellowship.

And here again I see possibilities that many—as yet uninterested in the development of the Church's institutional life—may come to see this life from a new angle. The mould in which it is shaped is not fixed for all time. Permutations and combinations are possible. Repercussions on the internal economy of the Anglican Church may be expected from our spiritual traffic with Churches built on the pattern of South India. All these possibilities, so threatening as they appear to some whose eyes are largely on the past, so hopeful to many people of goodwill whose eyes are on the future, would have been lost to us if absorption had taken the place of corporate building.

With the goal in view of a Church "other than Anglican—other than Rome," the interest in institutional architecture deepens and grows.

There is a fourth principle, which it might almost seem ridiculous to describe as newly-emerging in these Lambeth reports, but so far as I can see such is the case. It is the responsibility of the Church not merely to condemn sin but to seek the spiritual welfare of the sinner. I desire to commend it most earnestly to the outsider. . . .

The passage which I have in my mind is to be found in Resolution No. 11 which deals with Divorce. The subject itself and the Church's attitude towards it must be left for another chapter. The passage is as follows: The Conference

"would call attention to the Church's unceasing responsibility for the spiritual welfare of all her members who have come short of her standard in this as in any other respect, and to the fact that the Church's aim, individually and socially, is reconciliation to God and redemption from sin. It therefore urges all Bishops and clergy to keep this aim before them."

In the minds of a great many the Church presents a harsh appearance. It takes no public notice of many sins which are quite as damaging to the individual and to society as sins which spring from sexual passion. It applies rigid rules to those sexual sins whose guilt varies in an astonishing degree, and even to sufferers, who have not sinned themselves but who have become entangled with the sexual sins of others, it metes out cold comfort and consolation. It must often seem to the outsider that the Church, whether it is right or wrong in these matters, does not always approach them in the spirit of Christ. Even where it is recognised that such elasticity and such fearlessness of indiscretion as is to be found in Christ's dealings

with these sins cannot well be expected in an institution, something more than condemnation and excommunication is rightly looked for in official pronouncements.

It is from this point of view that the words which I have quoted introduce a new principle in the Church's official utterances. "The Church's responsibility for the spiritual welfare of those who come short of her standard" opens up many grave questions for the Church itself. How far can ostracism be meted out to one class of persons who come short of her standard and not to another? At the same time the recognition of responsibility creates the first link between the sinner and the Church. He is not to be treated as a heathen and publican. He is not to be regarded as an exile. Like many others, like ourselves it may be in regard to other kinds of sins, he has come short of the Church's standard. He, like others, stands in need of redemption, but notwithstanding he ought not to stand outside the circle of the Church's sympathetic influence and fellowship.

There are few things that make people, into whose lives have come some disaster of the kind we are considering, more bitter, than the ordinary attitude of Church people either to their sin or to their suffering. Church people, they find, are obsessed with the enormity of the sin and reluctant to participate in the misfortune. They are awkward in the offer of friendship and uncertain of their Christian duty. Again and again the offender or the sufferer finds himself met with what he well knows is an unchristian attitude. He has enough knowledge of what Christ stands for to know that aloofness is not Christianity nor condemnation the final word.

It may easily mean the beginning of a new relationship between the Church and the outsider if this responsibility is taken to heart. Many of the outsiders were Church members once, and amongst them are to be found those who have left the Church not for intellectual reasons or because

the Church has fallen flagrantly short of its own social ideals, but simply because of the Church's lack of heart and its failure in redeeming love. They have seen tragic and terrible cases handled by the Church according to one unyielding code; they have seen "sinners" on the fringes of the Church chased into the darkness by lack of Christian love, and they have grown to dislike the institution which acted in this way. They have dropped out foolishly as we think and without sufficient reason, but they have dropped out. A new and more Christian attitude on the part of Church people to those who have "come short" may recover them.

These are the four principles which the new Lambeth Conference brings to light. They offer constructive possibilities for the Church that lives by them. To believe in the Christian character of God, to work for Catholicity in the future, to subordinate all aims that are purely Anglican to the larger interests of Reunion, to touch all outsiders in the spirit of Christ, these are high and noble aims for any Church to set before itself. We may be grateful to the Bishops for impressing them upon us and tolerant of any circumstances which directly or indirectly have led to their insertion in the report.

This positive contribution stands out over against hesitations and delays which are to be found crippling the style and the message of some parts of the Report. But it is not the hesitations nor the delays by which the friendly critic will first judge. With every negative that stands in the way of God's positive there must be a final reckoning. No report can hold up the onward march of God's spirit. There is a husk in every document framed by man. It is sufficient that the husk encloses a kernel.

These principles will not drop out of any subsequent Lambeth that may be held. They will be more fully developed and applied. I can imagine the principle of our responsibility for redeeming the sinner forming the basis

of a new approach to our Prison Laws or our Divorce Regulations. I can imagine our faith in the Catholicity that is to come making us far more indifferent to the "sovereign rights of Anglicanism."

It is through these gates of hope that the Report has itself opened to us that we may proceed to face the disappointments.

CHAPTER VII

THE DISAPPOINTMENTS OF LAMBETH

“To hope till hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates.”
Shelley “Prometheus Unbound.”

THE DIVIDED character of the Anglican Communion makes it inevitable that the Lambeth conference should be disappointing. Progress is made with the brakes full on and the price of unity is ambiguity.

Amongst the people who share in the disappointment are the Bishops themselves. It is only they who know how much has been sacrificed to secure a unanimous report. One of the Bishops reminds us “that pages in the report, which to the outside reader look like smooth, coherent reading matter, will, for some at least, remind their framers of the battle areas in France. A single phrase will represent the shattered remnant of a bulwark; a specially big shell hole here and there will mark where some cherished paragraph or resolution has disappeared without a trace.”

It cannot be an easy thing to be one of three hundred diverse minds pledged apparently, if at all possible, to bring out a united report. The age-long struggle between Truth and Unity must often present itself in an acute form. No doubt the obvious solution of bringing out a majority and minority report on certain of the big questions considered was dismissed as unsuitable to the dignity of the Assembly and to the moral influence which Lambeth ought to exert over the Anglican Communion generally. Perhaps the number of minority reports which would have to be issued

(and the number of personal reservations to such reports), would have made such a course ridiculous. But the intelligent man does not like to be presented with a book which "looks like smooth coherent reading matter," the true inwardness of which has to be discovered by guessing at the omissions. He would prefer, if it were possible, to be treated in a more rational way. This, in itself, is one of the inevitable disappointments of Lambeth.

The Lambeth Conference does not exist for the purpose of telling the mind of each individual Bishop to the public. There are plenty of other ways by which he can reveal it. It meets to discover the possibility of a common mind in the episcopate and to communicate that to the public. In the event of failing to discover a common mind, efforts are naturally made to discover a formula or a line of action which will secure, if not the approval, at least the concurrence of the whole assembly. To some the result arrived at will seem a very poor second best, but they will probably content themselves with the thought that it is the best that can be done in the circumstances. It is the fruit of this "concurrence" rather than the fruit of a common mind which is usually communicated eventually to the public.

To a large extent Lambeth is a decennial registration of contemporary Church feeling. During the preceding ten years movements have taken place within the Church, parties in the Church have been losing or gaining ground. The impact of science on faith or morals has been creating unrest. Developments in institutional life have been tried out. All these things have to be dealt with in the light of Church feeling at the time. A courageous Lambeth can go a little ahead of Church opinion, a cautious Lambeth can lag behind it. The possibilities, however, are strictly limited, and Bishops who are fifty years "before their time" must find concurrence a little unpalatable.

The difference between the reception of a Papal pronouncement and a Lambeth Report by their respective Churches

is too obvious to call for comment. In the one case the pronouncement is passively accepted, in the other it is immediately submitted to the most searching criticism. It is not only the popular Press that discusses it with complete freedom, but every Church paper has its comments and its reservations. Later on, the Report will be discussed by Synods throughout the world and by Convocation and the Church Assembly in England. None of the seventy-five Resolutions of the Conference are "authoritative" for any part of the Anglican Church until they have been approved by the particular Synod concerned. Lambeth is not in a position to pronounce any final judgments for the Church of England. It is a responsible body with a constituency to consider which might easily get out of hand if pushed too hard or too quickly. There must always be present in the minds of the Bishops the possibility that their advice, if too far ahead of public opinion, might be repudiated by large sections of the Church, and that any indiscretion, even a logical indiscretion, on their part might cause disruption.

I do not regard this limitation of the powers of Lambeth as a bad thing. I do not want to exchange the oligarchic system of the Church of England for the despotism of the Church of Rome. The refusal by the Conference to appoint an Appellate Tribunal seems to be entirely justified.¹ If any change were to be made, I should prefer that it was in a democratic direction, and that there was more opportunity for the laity to be heard within the inner counsels of the Church. But some acquaintance with the way in which Lambeth "works" may mitigate the disappointments which we are about to consider. The shadow of our own divided Church life falls over it. It makes Lambeth itself a battle area. It is responsible for the shell holes. The knowledge that—throughout the length and breadth of the

¹ *Resolution 51*—The Conference, believing the formation of a central Appellate Tribunal to be inconsistent with the spirit of the Anglican Communion, holds that the establishment of final Courts of Appeal should be left to the decision of local and regional Churches.

Anglican Communion down to every Diocesan and Ruridecanal Conference—the words of their report will go to meet an Anglo-Catholic and an Evangelical point of view, constantly in collision, is enough to make these Bishops “refrain even from good words.” That is the real reason why at times they are not even lucid.

When we come to speak of disappointments, we find ourselves in difficulties about the personal note. What are disappointments to one are merciful deliverances to another. Such, at least, is the episcopal argument used in chastening the impatience of particular parsons or particular parties within the Church. “If you got all you wanted what about your *vis à vis*, your opposite member in the Church? If the Church took your line, what about the line of the other man which is not taken? If *you* were not disappointed, someone else would be.” So we are apt to be played off one against another, and the Church arrives at a stalemate.

But there are disappointments and disappointments. Some no doubt may be covered by the phrase “one man’s meat is another man’s poison,” but others strike at the roots of the confidence which the Conference enjoys, or at the sincerity of the Conference in endorsing its own professions.

Here is a case in point. For many months before the Conference a group of Church people worked with meticulous care to prepare a case for the admission of women to the Priesthood. The basis on which they met and carried on their labours was as follows:

“They cannot see any objection in principle to the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood. On this basis they have met together to inquire into the question in the light of the present discussion on Church Re-union, to collect information as to what has been done in other churches, and to consider the practical objections which have been raised on the ground of expediency.”

The membership of the group was representative of all schools of thought. Its chairman was a Bishop acceptable to all parties. Every objection to the admission of women to the Priesthood was considered, due weight being given to the practical difficulties alleged. A memorandum setting out the case with appendices, dealing with technical and psychological questions involved, was sent to the Bishops. The request made was a modest one—that if “the principle” was sound it might be admitted and the Church might be encouraged during the next ten years to discuss and seek to solve the practical difficulties involved. If the principle were not sound, the signatories of the memorandum asked as loyal Church people that the unsoundness might be demonstrated. There can be nothing but legitimate disappointment at the curt handling of the subject by the Bishops in Resolution No. 67.

“The Order of Deaconesses is for women the one and only Order of the Ministry which we can recommend our branch of the Catholic Church to recognise and use.”

This is no reply to the request for the consideration of the principle. It is a dismissal of the case if not unheard, at least unrefuted. Presumably other branches of the Catholic Church might, if they chose, recommend the opening of the Priesthood to women. The Anglican Church is not prepared to do so, but it will not state its reasons. The subject is taboo. We may reserve further consideration of the matter until another chapter.

Disappointment, more wide spread, will be felt at the halting attitude of the Church towards the new Church in South India which it has helped to bring into being. The magnificent conception of creating a Catholic Church other than Anglican, to which Anglicans with others should make their contribution, is sadly marred by the grudging way in which the Anglican Church begins to safeguard its own

position and limit its own intercommunion with this new Church. The Anglican contingent which goes to form the New Church is not sent out from the home like a bride who goes to meet her husband at the altar, but rather pushed out into the wilderness like Hagar at the bidding of a jealous Sarah. There is a certain aptness about the Old Testament story to the present situation. Not only is there a jealous Sarah in the background but there is a question of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of Hagar's child! Some of the Bishops, apparently, are not quite certain whether Abraham ought ever to have begat Ishmael or whether the Church of South India ought ever to have been born. It is better, at any rate, to dismiss him and his mother into the wilderness, lest the son of the bondwoman should dispute the inheritance with the son of the freewoman. It may be of some consolation to those who are thrust out into the wilderness to know that, when the scanty provision ran out which Abraham provided, the Lord provided a well of water! The Lord heard the voice of the lad crying for water, as the Lord can hear the voice of a young Church deserted by its Anglican father. And we may fitly close the parallel with the promise to the faithful Hagar: "Arise, lift up the lad; for I will make him a great nation."

It would have been a fine gesture, recognising that Catholicity lies in the future, to offer intercommunion wholeheartedly and unashamed to the new Church. The distinction which seems to be drawn between a Church potentially Catholic but not "genuinely" Catholic is one which is hard to follow. The seeds of many new controversies have been sown by this niggardly treatment of the South India Church. There is a touch of Pharisaism about the words in which the Anglican Church says Good-bye to its own pioneers who are throwing in their fortunes with it. After speaking of the "temporary severance" in relationships with the Church in North India, the encyclical letter reminds its pioneers "that these are sacrifices which we believe they will

cheerfully make!" No doubt the encyclical letter is right. These sacrifices will be cheerfully made. But what about the position of the Anglican Church which refuses its share of sacrifice? To point the way to sacrifice to others and to refuse the path oneself is neither very dignified nor very Christian. Though there may be no complaint from the men who cheerfully accept the path marked out for them, ordinary simple Christian people will be disappointed by this appearance of desertion.

The reply will be made that this is the best way of tiding over the difficulties of the moment. This may be so. But what if it projects new difficulties into the future? We can only hope that the sense of comradeship will prevail over technicalities, and that, when the time comes for the inauguration of the new Church, a movement of the Spirit may sweep away the mental obstructions which now bar the way to a declaration of intercommunion.

There is another disappointment which concerns those whose hearts are set upon Home Reunion. Ten years have passed since the last Lambeth Conference. Five years have passed since the declaration of the official representatives of the Church of England and of the Federal Council of Free Churches that "Free Church Ministries are real Ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Catholic Church."

Yet this Lambeth Conference has nothing more constructive to offer after this lapse of time than to refer to the conferences which have been held and to express the hope "that at an early date such Conferences may be resumed with a view to ascertaining whether the proposed scheme for Union prepared for the Churches in South India, or other proposals which have been put forward, suggest lines on which further advance towards agreement on questions of order can be made, and that similar conferences may be held elsewhere."

It is well known that these conferences were suspended

because of the hesitation on the part of the Church of England to endorse, by any kind of constructive action, the interpretation which Free Churchmen felt justified in putting on these words.

The way out of the deadlock which arose could easily have been found by a fresh and fuller statement by the Lambeth Conference of what the Anglican Church really does mean in its references to Free Church orders. But the opportunity of clarifying the position has gone by. The words, so clear upon their surface meaning, yet so ambiguously received and interpreted in the Church of England, have received no further elucidation from Lambeth. The various parties concerned are invited to resume their conferences without such help and guidance on a crucial matter as they might reasonably have expected.

It is true that the South India scheme is definitely referred to the consideration of the Home Church in the hope that it may "suggest lines on which further advance towards agreement on questions of order can be made." This would give greater satisfaction if the questions of order in the South India scheme had themselves reached a more satisfactory stage. To refer one ambiguity to another for purposes of settlement does not seem a very hopeful line. It is evident that there lies before us a difficult task in constructing the basis of Home Reunion. The rate of progress has been regrettably slow, and the acceleration which might have been expected from Lambeth is not forthcoming.

It is possible, however, that preoccupation with South India has prevented Lambeth from giving much thought to our home situation, and that the more acute minds, which were desirous of home reunion, were less disturbed by this preoccupation than we would have expected. The question of Reunion with the Evangelical Free Churches is the question which looms so large in the South India scheme, and nothing can prevent a settlement there eventually affecting our relations with the Free Churches at home.

Thus by a roundabout method a greater driving force towards Reunion will have been created.

Let us hope that it may be so, since our national life is calling for a United Church witness just as much as the heathenism of India. We cannot wait much longer, for there is a flood tide in the affairs of Churches as of men. As doubts arise in the minds of those who receive general invitations to visit their friends' houses but who find no date they venture to suggest for such a visit is ever convenient, so the general invitations to unity—so freely distributed by the Anglican Communion in its encyclical letters—lose something of their force when those who wish to accept the invitations find the plea of inconvenience so often raised!

Much of the closer co-operation which has been growing up between the Church of England and the Free Churches has been based unconsciously on the hopes of reunion which took shape after the war, and were expressed so ardently and persuasively in the Lambeth Encyclical letter of 1920. The feeling that "one day we shall be one" has taken the sting out of ancient controversies, has created in many places the most delightful spirit of mutual confidence, has completely altered the psychological situation and has inspired numbers of joint enterprises. This growing nearness has been fostered by statements and pronouncements on Free Church orders which seemed to carry with them the implications of potential "oneness." The present situation rests upon this indefinable expectation that, in our own day and generation, we, here in England, are moving towards a common goal. It would be disastrous if this developing situation were undercut by the weakening of the faith on which it rests—if unwarrantable delays or illegitimate obstruction were to destroy the hope of its final consummation.

In this connection the small encouragement given to intercommunion must be regarded as a further disappoint-

ment. The case for intercommunion as a "stepping stone" towards reunion rather than a coping stone to the final structure has been ably argued by distinguished writers both within and without the Church of England, and many Bishops sanction and approve it. It is therefore surprising to find in Resolution 42 the Conference "maintaining the general principle that intercommunion should be the goal of rather than a means to the restoration of Union." As a registration of dominant Church feeling at the moment the words are not inapt but the movement for intercommunion in special circumstances—in obedience to psychological laws and under the direct guidance of the Spirit—has grown so strong that the soundness of "the principle" enunciated by Lambeth becomes more and more doubtful. Experience proves that intercommunion quickens the desire for organic unity. Continued refusal for reasons which seem inadequate to those who are excluded kills the desire for restoration of Union. It is mutual participation in the life of the Church, tasting together of its good things, sharing together at times in its sacramental fellowship that creates the spirit of Reunion. The following testimony of a missionary, which appears in the volume entitled *The Call to Christian Unity*, expresses exactly the psychological effect of intercommunion.

"I was much struck the other day by a little incident in which I played a part. One of the leading Methodist Missionaries out here came up to me after a group of C.M.S. men had deliberately attended a united Communion taken by a Methodist Bishop at the close of our Annual Conference of Federated Missions and said: 'To see your men there made me want to go straight away to receive ordination at the hands of one of your Bishops that we might become one.' He would never have said that if we had presented to him the most clear and cogent argument for the need of episcopal ordination."

There is no part of the report which resembles more the description of a battle-strewn area than this long Resolution No. 42 dealing with the subject of intercommunion. It is clear—from the notes and the qualifications, the parentheses and the explanations—that the resolution is the outcome of a prolonged struggle. It is left in a very unsatisfactory state. The Missionary Bishops were more successful than the Home Bishops in securing relaxations of “the rule of our Church that the minister of the Sacrament of Holy Communion should be a priest episcopally ordained.” The needs of the Mission field were so urgent and so insistent that logic had to give way, and permission is granted, under safeguards of time and place, in very special circumstances for Anglican communicants to receive the Holy Communion from non-episcopally ordained ministers. The actual words which give the permission are so important that they must be quoted in full:

“The Bishops of the Anglican Communion will not question the action of any Bishop who may, in his discretion so exercised, sanction an exception to the general rule in special areas, where the ministrations of an Anglican Church are not available for long periods of time or without travelling great distances, or may give permission that baptized communicant members of Churches not in communion with our own should be encouraged to communicate in Anglican churches, when the ministrations of their own Church are not available, or in other special or temporary circumstances.”

An illustration from the Mission field will make it clear how this permission will work. It so happens that the people in the South of Persia have been evangelised by Anglican missions and the people of the North by Presbyterians. Until quite recently the two communities, separated by great distances and with little or no communication, lived

in comparative ignorance of one another. With the building of roads, the arrival of the motor and discovery of abundant supplies of petrol the situation is completely changed. Christians from the north travel easily to the south and vice versa. It strikes them as very odd to be forbidden to come to the Holy Communion with their brethren. For them the distinctions between Anglicans and Presbyterians do not exist; people are either Christians or Mahomedans. Separation seems irrational.

The Resolution of the Bishops is intended to remove this "oddness," and to regularise the intercommunion which must constantly be taking place. It would be unthinkable for either Church to follow its members on their journey and to provide ecclesiastical protection for them against such contacts. Hence the relaxation of "the rule" of the Anglican Church that the minister of the Sacrament of the Holy Communion shall be a priest episcopally ordained. Careful as the report is to define this kind of relaxation as entirely exceptional, the observer who thinks in terms of the future can easily see that the relaxation thus granted cannot stop there. As is well known, it is by the gradual admission of exceptions that rigid rules become obsolete in the Church of England, and the way is opened for devising new ones more suited to our modern needs.

It is pleasant to bring this depressing chapter dealing with disappointments to a close on a more hopeful note. The long struggle for more elasticity in our outlook on questions of order and sacraments is slowly bearing fruit. Presbyterians in English villages, Anglicans in the glens of Scotland, Methodists on holiday on the Continent, Lutherans arriving in this country will presently be able to avail themselves without let or hindrance of the Sacraments of the nearest Church.

If we put side by side with this growing relaxation the fact that no condemnation appears in the pages of the Report of such an Interdenominational Communion Service as took

place during the Jerusalem Conference on the Mount of Olives, Easter Day, 1928, or of the other numerous interdenominational services which on special occasions have spontaneously and irresistibly been held, we need not feel discouraged. General principles are always being reshaped under the anvil of experience, and rules, when found unworkable, become obsolete in time. The congregational life of our various Churches needs to be baptised into a new spirit before intercommunion can be thought of on a large or institutional scale. Where the Spirit of God is creating the spiritual hunger for intercommunion, no doubt ways will be found—they surely must be found—for satisfying it. Meantime the work devolves upon those who cherish the hope of Home Reunion, steadfastly to create such happy relationships with their Free Church brethren, that the Church may come to see that intercommunion is psychologically and spiritually its inevitable expression.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RATIONALISATION OF THE CHURCH

“ Order is heaven’s first law.”

Milton.

“ To be virtuous it is not necessary to be inefficient.”

M. Taylor.

“ We have removed one ton, two hundredweight of dirt from our church by means of the vacuum cleaner. Could not others follow suit? ”

Letter from a Churchwarden.

OUR RAILWAY travelling in England is still a survival of the old coaching days. The passengers’ luggage is stored in the van just as it was put into the well of the coach. The modern system of registration has never been adopted. We are a comfortable, old-fashioned people in this and other matters. Visitors from America never cease to speak of our curious indifference to labour-saving devices in our homes. Even the increasing shortage of domestic servants will not drive us to fix hot and cold water to our various bedrooms. In a man-made world the extra worry which is involved for the family at home does not seem a serious matter!

But the world of economics and industry, even in our own country, is now submitting to principles of rationalisation, and scientific management is replacing methods which are out of date. “Horizontal and vertical” combines are revolutionising the methods of production and distribution. Trade Unionists equally with employers, the management equally with the shareholders, are prepared to accept as essential these principles in some shape or form.

The definition given by the World Economic Conference held at Geneva in 1927 is sufficiently concrete:

“Rationalisation is understood as the methods of technique and organisation designed to secure the minimum waste of either effort or material. It includes the scientific organisation of labour, standardisation both of material and products, simplification of processes, and improvements in the system of transport and marketing.”

Everyone is convinced that business cannot be carried on along the old wasteful lines, that a modern world requires modern methods, and that a large measure of disturbance and rearrangement is justified in order to secure the best results.

What of the Church? Is it to follow the methods of the old coaching days or the methods of modern business? I can imagine someone taking strong exception to my blunt way of putting it. The Church, it will be said, is a family and not a business concern. It is a spiritual and not a secular institution. It teaches the world but does not imitate it. The discussion is out of court.

Just because there are still some who think about the Church in this way, it may be well to try and get certain points clear before we discuss the possibilities of rationalisation. In the first place, the use of the word “secular” as an antithesis to “spiritual” is singularly unfortunate. There need be no necessary opposition between the two. I remember the late Archbishop Bernard, of Dublin, used to tell a story of how, as he was entering a railway carriage one day, a man said to him “Are you a priest or a clergyman?” His reply was “Maybe I’m both.” Precisely the same reply may be made to the question: Is the Church a religious or secular institution? Maybe it’s both. Nor need it feel any shame if it admits its secular as well as its religious character. There is nothing wrong about secular thought

or interest or organisation in itself. It is only when it is divorced from the religious motive or spirit that the word "secular" deserves all the hard things that are said about it by ecclesiastics. We are all engaged in secular things: housekeeping, shop serving, office and factory work. That does not mean we are necessarily irreligious people. We can bring into the secular part of our lives—the part which concerns our household chores and the earning of our bread and butter—a faith and purpose which give moral value to the secular life.

The Church, too, has its secular side, and it ought to be as efficiently run as the business side of any institution. It ought, in fact, to be better run since there should be more public spirit in the Church than anywhere else. There should, for example, be less consideration for vested interests, more desire for experiments, more dynamic force available than in other institutions. In the employment of its money, the organisation of its staff, and the distribution of its goods, the Church, because it is the Church, should be able to show a high pattern of efficiency.

Here again it is necessary to remove ambiguity if there is hesitation in conceding that the Church should imitate the world. On its spiritual side there is no thought of imitation. The Church is concerned with the Revelation of God in Christ. It has something original and unique to give. But all down the ages it has borrowed its ideas of organisation from the secular society in which it worked. The Roman Empire, the Feudal system, the oligarchical method (by which most countries until recent times were governed), have all stamped their impress upon the organisation of the Church. The effect of the industrial age, in which we live, with its stress upon business methods and its higher standards of efficiency in all departments of communal life cannot leave the Church untouched. It organises and transacts its business in a world which expects efficiency and is seeking to organise its business on scientific

lines. It is inevitable that the Church should respond to the ideas of its own age if it is to survive as an institution. In this sense it may be called "imitative." It might be more rightly described as sensitive. But it is well to be clear on the point that the Divine character of the Church does not make it any the less a human institution, which has to be run by human brains and administered on the best lines which human wisdom has made available at each epoch of its history.

This modern method, then, of rationalisation, which is leaving its mark on the business life of to-day—forcing to the front certain principles, rearranging man power and producing new combinations—may have its lesson and teaching for the Church.

Moreover, whatever may be our view about preserving the more unsophisticated Church life, the contrary process has set in. Rationalisation of a kind began in the Church (as in the business world), long before the word was coined or its definition formally discussed. The creation of smaller dioceses, combined with the larger general supervision which is secured through the Church Assembly, is an attempt to secure more scientific management. The provision of pensions with a view to the removal of those who can no longer work efficiently, the invention of checks which may prevent the unsuitable workman from entering upon an unsuitable job, the amalgamation of parishes and the measures for dealing with parsonage houses all come under the general heading of rationalisation. The guiding principle of all these reforms is efficiency. They do not directly touch the spiritual life of the Church, except in so far as all spiritual life is hindered by the irritations caused by untidiness and waste. They are concerned with making the Church more perfect on the institutional and secular side.

The fact that this work has begun ought to be more generally recognized by the critics of the Church. The outsider, who is often repelled by what he regards as ex-

treme conservatism in the Church's methods, does not really look close enough. Changes have begun. We must judge things not by what they have been, but by what they are in process of becoming, and by such standards there is good hope for the future. We possess an elective legislative Assembly, which can, if it is converted, secure the reforms in administration and practice which are desired. There is at any rate no insuperable bar to progress as there was before the Enabling Act of 1919 which brought the Church Assembly into being.

It will be understood, then, that the suggestions which I desire to make for carrying the process of rationalisation a great deal further are put forward in a friendly atmosphere. I do not fight in this matter as "one that beateth the air." The principle of efficiency is becoming more widely recognised in the Church every day, even with its accompanying dangers, and suggestions are for the most part considered on their merits. The dead weight of engrained prejudice to be overcome is probably not much greater than in the reorganisation of industry itself.

I do not propose to deal with the intricate question of rationalising the finances of the Church of England. To a large extent it has been dealt with in the Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Property and Revenue of the Church of England. Only people with great expert and general knowledge could suggest how the annual income of the Church of England, estimated at £7,221,000, might be spent to the best advantage. It is generally admitted that it is not so spent now. The striking difference in the incomes of the clergy, out of all proportion to any scale of ability or to length of service and completely haphazard in its mode of operation, is sufficient proof how much rationalisation is needed. The inability of the Church to make sufficient use of its capital for financing big scale operations and promoting Church development has recently evoked much criticism. The following extract from a letter in

The Times of March 6, 1930, shows how, in the judgment of many people, the burden of Church Extension, which has proved so extraordinarily heavy in some of the poorer dioceses, might have been greatly alleviated, if not entirely lifted, by a more modern policy in the handling of capital.

“No bursar at Oxford or Cambridge would dream of trying to pay for new college buildings out of income. Such expenditure is met by borrowing the capital moneys which the college has invested, and replacing them by an annual sinking fund spread over a long term of years. The Church, too, has very large invested funds in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Queen Anne’s bounty, and is adding substantially to them every year as the sinking fund payments in respect of tithe rent charge are invested. The gilt-edged securities which represent these investments do no good to the Church beyond the annual income which they provide. If some part of these funds was spent on the building of new churches the income would, indeed, be lost, but a capital asset of incalculable value would be gained. Moreover, the cost to the laity of making good the loss of income and providing a sinking fund to replace the expended capital would be far less than the cost of building churches out of income, and leave them better able to subscribe adequately to the funds for the training of ordinands.”¹

The aspects of rationalisation, however, to which I desire to draw attention, are (1) the redistribution of man power, (2) the modification of the parochial system, (3) the securing of more varied types of service for the Church by the provision of auxiliary forces.

The facts about the decline in the man power of the Church are well known. At the beginning of this century

¹ Letter written by G. R. Y. Radcliffe, The Bursary, New College, Oxford.

there were 21,000 clergy of all ranks at work in England; last year there were 15,070, with a population considerably increased. During the last fifteen years there has been a decrease of 3,000. The present shortage, when all allowances have been made, is usually estimated at between 4,000 and 5,000.

Gallant and strenuous efforts are being made to repair the deficiency by the Central Organisation of the Church, by the various dioceses and by the Anglo-Catholic, Evangelical and Modernist parties within the Church. Yet the result of all their united efforts still leaves the present shortage. An interesting discussion will be found in the Report of the Lambeth Conference on the various reasons for this deficiency. The indifference to the Church and to religion in which so many grow up creates, it is said, "an atmosphere" unfavourable to ordination. The clerical life has not been presented to young men in its "true and really attractive character. The petty hardships have loomed too large, the high ideal has been obscured. Intellectual misgivings or financial embarrassment bar the way, and sufficient pains have not been taken in either case to meet the difficulties which have arisen." With this analysis of the situation there will be general agreement, and with the series of resolutions urging that teaching about vocation may be given to parents, school teachers and clergy, that "every Christian man and woman may seek out and encourage signs of such vocation," and that the Church should "find, when necessary, the means for the training of those whom God has called."

It will be many years, I fear, before any great change can be looked for in the available man power of the Church, and meantime Lambeth gives us no guidance about its redistribution. The most urgent need at the moment is that such clergy as we have should be better distributed. The south coast is well supplied, the industrial areas are starved. In the Rural Deanery of Bermondsey, for example,

with a population of 120,000 there are only three assistant clergy. In some of the northern towns, like Sheffield, curates are almost extinct.

There ought to be some way of arranging things by which men, in whom a sense of vocation has been aroused, should gravitate rather to the place where they are needed than to the places which they may happen to prefer. Some modification of choice has already been introduced through the stipulations, usually made by dioceses in giving grants to ordination candidates, that when ordained they shall work in the diocese for a certain number of years. But every diocese has its west end as well as its east end, and the promise to work in the diocese does not necessarily mean that any proper distribution of man power between west end and east end will take place. Furthermore, the restriction of liberty directly based on a money grant is not entirely satisfactory. The assertion of a general principle that men should be prepared to go where the need is greatest and where, in the judgment of responsible people, they could do their best work, would be better than this indirect and ineffective financial control.

The working out of the principle would need great care. It would be essential to leave much room for elasticity. Any kind of autocratic decision which left out the intelligent co-operation of the man himself must necessarily fail. Any attempt to send him to work with a particular person, with whom he was temperamentally out of sympathy, would quite possibly be disastrous. But there might well be a board of assessors, representing the whole Church and attached to each theological college, whose advice could be sought by ordination candidates and whose recommendation would be one of the papers which the candidate would submit to the Bishop proposing to ordain him. On such a board the Principal of the College would sit *ex officio*. In the case of candidates not in residence at theological colleges a Central Board of Assessors could

be consulted. The important thing to secure is that the needs of the Church as a whole and not of any particular locality should first be presented to the candidate, and that he should be encouraged to make his ultimate decision not on local grounds or personal considerations but with a view to where he is most needed.

In the same way, whenever a man leaves a curacy, he ought to have the advantage of first consulting a body of Assessors as to the needs and opportunities of the moment. Probably a series of choices would be set before him, and with the guidance obtained he could make a good decision. Like so many other things in the Church of England, the transfer of curates is almost entirely haphazard. Unsuccessful vicars waste small fortunes in advertisements, while the holders of "key" positions make satisfactory arrangements through their friends. The interests of the Church as a whole remain badly served. Only with the gradual emergence of the principle that every displacement or replacement of man power in any part of the Church concerns the Church as a whole can we begin to hope for an adjustment of the heavy burdens now borne single-handed by men working in huge industrial areas.

Further relief can be obtained by bolder modifications of our parochial system than we have yet attempted. Amalgamation of parishes (or as it is technically called the Union of Benefices) has done a good deal to counteract the shortage of clergy generally and to provide a better average of work for the country clergy. In a city, modifications of a different kind are needed to make the Church an effective force. True, a certain number of parishes in the inner belt of a city, where the resident slum population is being replaced by warehouses, might be amalgamated, and a limited number of churches converted into social centres. But it must be borne in mind that, though the resident population in these parishes is dwindling, the working population is often very considerable, and the

opportunities for week-day work and friendly contacts of all kinds are much greater than in the suburbs.

What is needed is that a sharp distinction should be drawn between the working of suburban, artisan and industrial areas. To think in terms of parishes is misleading. There are groups of ideas, principles and methods of working which are proper to one type of locality and not to another. The parochial system is not a homogeneous entity. I suggest that some kind of separate federation of these types of parishes should be formed in a city for the purpose of rationalising the work of the Church in their particular area. The old Ruridecanal configurations could remain for ecclesiastical purposes. The reorganisation of the Church's man power could most easily be carried out by thinking not so much of the needs of parishes as of areas. Different kinds of Churches, different types of institutional Church life are needed by suburban, artisan and industrial districts.

Thus in the industrial area, the first thought would be not how can the diocese find a curate for this or that parish, but how can it provide effective workers, curates or otherwise, to make an impression upon the factory life which is the characteristic feature of all these parishes in common. A common policy could be agreed upon by the parishes concerned, grants could be pooled and workers, trained after the pattern of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, could be secured. These workers would work under the general direction of the Chairman and Executive of the Parochial Federation. The old idea that every curate should be licensed to a particular parish and appointed to the same kind of omnibus job needs to give way to that of curates appointed for special kinds of work in particular areas, nominated by the areas themselves and appointed and paid directly by the diocese.

The great value of the work of the Industrial Christian Fellowship has been to show that something over and

above the working of the parochial system is needed if certain types of people and certain kinds of work are to be properly provided for by the Church. The work of the Fellowship is very much of a pioneer work, and the principles for which it stands need to be incorporated in the reorganisation or rationalisation of our Church life. For certain purposes parochial boundaries must be treated as non-existent, and men must be set free to follow the job to which they are appointed throughout its natural area.

This leads me to speak of "the more varied types of service," which rationalisation can secure, and for which the modification of parochial boundaries is essential. It is not only the man who goes to speak in the factories and whose job it is to make friends with organised labour that needs to be free to go where his job takes him. There is the man whose job it ought to be to look after the shop assistants who live in, who becomes Chaplain to the Police Force, who co-ordinates the work of the Hospital Chaplains, who spends his time amongst the students, whose liaison work is with the schools. There are scores of possible developments in experimental work, provided the rigidity of the parochial system is progressively modified. A group of parishes round the University can work out a common policy, and with the aid of the Diocese make some real impression upon the life of the students, which would be impossible for a single parish alone. Why should not the "group" deal directly with the Student Christian Movement and obtain from it the right man or woman to do its local work, just as the Industrial Group might secure its worker from the I.C.F.?

A large part of the most interesting work that the Church could undertake has been taken from it through its failure to rationalise. Obsessed with the idea that each parson is to cultivate his own little plot (an excellent idea as far as it goes), it has failed to meet new developments and to adapt itself to the kind of contacts which are appreciated in the modern world. People are not particularly interested in

one another because they live in the same parish; they fall into groups connected with their professions or their amusements, or their infirmities. Hence we have the Student Movement doing its fine work amongst the students but often, without in the least intending it, leaving the impression that the Church itself is a very dull affair without any special interest in college life. We can hardly complain, for to the ordinary person the Church means the parochial system, and what has the parochial system done for students?

In the same way Toc H is now doing magnificent work in drawing out this spirit of service amongst young people and adding—with the older work of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.—to the great heap of interesting work which the parochial system of the Church of England has been quite unable to tackle. If we add the care of the blind and the cripple, the orphan and the destitute, which to a large extent has passed into the hands of voluntary institutions, we can see how circumscribed and even dull our work tends to become within the orbit of the parochial system.

There are plenty of good reasons why all this specialised work should grow up in independence or semi-independence of our Church system. It was the only way, and it was better so in days gone by. The very idea of interdenominational work is of recent growth. Along with parochial activities went "tests," and Chapel people were apt to fare badly. The social worker wanted more freedom and the Church was shy about giving it. The philanthropist wanted only the spirit of religion and the Church found it difficult to separate spirit from a somewhat rigid form. There is no going back, but—unless all the interesting and much of the vitally important work for religion is to be done outside the Church itself—parochial boundaries must become much more elastic and tolerant of many types of service.

The last aspect of rationalisation which I desire to discuss is the provision of auxiliary forces. Strictly speaking, it can hardly be called rationalisation (for it concerns rather

the bringing in of new resources than the more scientific employment of the old), but each of the aspects of the subject overlaps, I find, with the other, and it is needless to try and keep them apart. Certain proposals for increasing the numerical strength and for making fuller use of these auxiliary forces are contained in the report of the Lambeth Conference.

In certain circumstances, where the need is great, the rule that Ordination involves full and lifelong service for the Church, separated from other means of livelihood, is to be relaxed. If the province (that is, the group of Dioceses united under an Archbishop) approves, men of mature age and assured position may possibly be ordained as auxiliary priests to help on Sunday and in their spare time, while continuing to earn their living in their present occupations. The permission is given in a curious and characteristic way. After first stating that the Conference cannot recommend a widespread adoption of the practice on the ground that lifelong service is required of a Priest, the resolution goes on to add that the Conference "sees no insuperable objection" to the ordination, with provincial sanction and under proper safeguards, where the need is great of auxiliary priests. It would be more correct to say that the practice is condoned rather than encouraged. The Province may sanction and the Bishop may ordain auxiliary priests at their own risks.

Still, the door is opened in the cautious way in which an Assembly of three hundred Bishops, not wholly at unity, can alone hope to open it. It is much to be desired that the experiment may soon be tried in favourable conditions. There is no support in Apostolic custom or teaching for separating the ordained person from worldly occupations. It is a convention which has grown up for obvious reasons, but which has regularly been broken in the case of schoolmasters, and irregularly in the case of novelists. Most of us know some one man of splendid Christian life, neither a schoolmaster nor a novelist, who might well be ordained

and whose reputation in his own particular occupation would add lustre to his ordination. It is this one man who is needed and whom the Church cannot afford to lose.

Like most new things, the proposal would not be acceptable to all the members of our congregations at once. It would be described as an innovation, and the word "innovation," like "curiosity," in the English language has taken on a sinister meaning. It has only to be mentioned to arouse prejudice. But I can think of men who might be ordained in this way capable of living down any prejudice on the part of the congregation to which he might minister. Even that particular person, whose critical attitude to the clergy is only exceeded by his distrust of his fellow laity, would be converted by one or two whom I know.

There is only one question which I should like to raise: What is precisely meant by a man of "assured position"? People will think of a retired Bank manager, a retired colonel, a magistrate, a doctor, or the squire of the village. All sorts of pictures rise to the mind when an "assured position" is mentioned but not, I suppose, of a miner or an engine driver. I hope the words "assured position" are not meant to imply any social limitations. A godly miner or engine driver could make an excellent auxiliary priest; the only handicap about the latter would be that he would be so constantly engaged with his engine on Sunday. If we are really going to return to something of the freedom of Apostolic days, when Paul combined tent-making with preaching the Gospel, it would be a sad pity if we fettered ourselves with some of the worst of the Victorian conventions. The words "assured position" need watching lest they should come to have the same associations as the words "my betters" in the Catechism.

Other suggestions for relieving the shortage of the clergy include the extension to selected Lay Readers of permission to administer the chalice and to deaconesses of permission to take baptisms and churchings. It will be more convenient

if the whole subject of the Church's attitude to women and its methods of employing their services should be discussed in a separate chapter. It is sufficient to note here the anomalous position that a deaconess, ordained and presumably in Holy Orders, is not allowed to help in the administration of the Holy Communion, whereas a licensed Lay Reader is allowed to do so. Behind a position of that kind lies the whole question of sex disqualification.

The admission of Lay Readers to help in the administration of the Holy Communion raises no new principle. Laymen have often helped in the past, and no new precedent is being created. It will prove a useful piece of rationalisation where, on special festivals, clergy working single-handed, have large numbers to communicate. As the Warden of Lay Readers, in the diocese in which I work, I can testify to the fact that the quality of Lay Readers licensed is constantly improving as well as the seriousness with which they take their work, and there ought to be no difficulty in finding a number of suitable men to assist the clergy in this way.

It is to be hoped that all these little bits of rationalisation may become gradually effective, but it will be noticed that none of them touch the more fundamental questions connected with the parochial system. We need a Commission to consider its working and to see how it can best be accommodated to large scale operations of the Church.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH AND WOMEN'S MINISTRY

"How shall it be done with me as Thou hast said. . . . ? For my sex is an obstacle as Thou knowest, Lord, through many causes as well because it is contemptible in men's eyes as because propriety forbids me to any freedom of converse with the other sex."

But the Lord answered: "I pour out the favour of my spirit on whom I will, there is neither male nor female, plebeian or noble. All are equal before me. . . . Therefore, my daughter, it is my will that thou appear before the public."

Diary of Catherine of Siena.

"There are some prejudices which cannot be plucked out of the minds of men at once, but yet may be so loosened by degrees that they will fall off by themselves; as there are many knots untied with patience or leisure, which by a violent pulling are fixed so much the faster."

Archbishop Tillotson.

"Still nursing the unconquerable hope."

Matthew Arnold.

THE ADVOCATES of the extension of a Women's Ministry in the Church of England are probably the most disappointed group of people who have studied the Report of the Lambeth Conference. No new ground has been broken and no extension of any consequence has been granted to the Women's Ministry. This major disappointment requires a chapter to itself.

There were many reasons why some better results might have been expected. Women have been accustomed at all times to come to the rescue of men when they are in need.

During the war there was hardly any kind of a man's job that a woman did not at sometime or other undertake. Short of actually fighting or administering the Sacraments (strange contrast), there was nothing to which a woman did not put her hand when needed. Now women have been hearing for a long time of the shortage of the clergy and the dearth of ordination candidates. It occurred to some of them that—if the Church, like the nation, was so short of men—they might be needed. The Church has very definitely said No. Quite firmly, it has indicated its intention to dispense for the next ten years with any recruits for the ministry drawn from that quarter. However much the numbers may fall, however great the need of people unshepherded and unfed, women will not be asked to fill the gaps or to supply the need.

Another reason, which suggested better things, was the fact that during the last ten years considerable progress has been made with the development of a Women's Ministry in other Communion. There are now fully ordained women ministers in the Congregational Church. In 1921 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in England agreed that there is no barrier in principle to the admission of women to the Ministry.

“In 1922 the Assembly declared the office of Deaconship and the office of Eldership to be open to women on the same terms as to men and authorised the ordination of women Deacons and Elders in the same manner and subject to their acceptance of the same formula as in the case of men. Many churches have since appointed women Elders and women Deacons, Elders being commissioned in certain circumstances to administer the sacrament of Holy Communion.”

In 1928 the Wesleyan Methodist agreed that “a woman who believes herself called to give to the Christian ministry

in our Church may offer under the same regulations as apply to men."

But the Church of England still remains stubborn, and repeats in practically identical words its declaration of 1920 "that the order of Deaconesses is the one and only Order of the Ministry which we can recommend our branch of the Catholic Church to recognise and use." The advocates of a Women's Ministry are left to extract what cold comfort they can from the wording of the resolution. The resolution, it will be noticed, does not forbid the Priesthood for Women as contrary to God's law, or because it is inconsistent with the mind of Christ. It is only "not recommended." It is possible that one day it may be recommended. Much stranger things have come to pass, as may be observed from a study of the files of the Lambeth Conference. Meantime, for a number of women another ten years of frustrated vocation must go by.

There was another reason, too, which might have suggested and justified the hope of a more favourable response. As I have already explained, six months before the Conference a responsible group of men and women, all members of the Church of England, came together and worked steadily on the preparation of a scholarly memorandum setting out the case for the admission of women to the Priesthood, and dealing in a series of appendices with psychological and other questions involved. It was submitted to the Bishops, and has since been published by Messrs. Longman under the title of *Women and Priesthood*.¹ The general public, by reading the memorandum, can judge for themselves of the care with which the case was stated.

It asks, first, for a more explicit recognition that women deacons form part of the threefold ministry, secondly, that the functions of women deacons should be made identical with those of men called to that Ministry, and thirdly, for an authoritative statement that the exclusion of women

¹ See *Women and Priesthood*, p. 22, Longmans.

hitherto from the office of Priest has been a disciplinary rule of the Church, not the assertion of an incapacity inherent in womanhood. It was not contemplated that any immediate action could be taken, but the hope was expressed that some committee might be appointed to consider the matter further in all its bearings.

However, none of these requests have been granted. Instead of a considered judgment on the matter, the committee of the Conference, appointed to deal with the ministry of the Church, did "not think that this is the place or time for full discussion." The majority decided that "there are theological principles which constitute an insuperable obstacle to the admission of women to the Priesthood apart from all considerations of expediency." The committee as a whole came to the conclusion that the new conditions of modern life do not demand "a departure from the universal custom of the Catholic Church." They cannot, they say, "encourage in any way those who press for the Priesthood of women." On the contrary, they add, "we are bold to say that in the order of Deaconess . . . there is scope for the exercise of women's ministry within the commissioned Orders of the Church of such a kind as to satisfy the highest aspirations." The paragraph dealing with the subject concludes with expressing the belief that God will abundantly bless this restricted ministry. God "will give the measure of grace which will enrich and uplift the service which His ordained daughters will contribute."

The great majority of Church people, without examining very closely the medley of reasons which the Bishops have given for their decision, will probably be glad that the matter has been shelved. On the assumption that the Lambeth Conference is largely a registration of Church feeling, it is possible to justify the refusal to take any definite steps. No Lambeth Conference, however, can put an end to the demand which will go on quite steadily that sex

disqualification shall no longer apply to the ministry of the Church of England. The mass of prejudice to be overcome is very great, especially amongst Church people who have been brought up in conservative traditions. The outsider, when he takes the trouble to study the functions of sex in relation to the primitive spirit of Christianity, does not seem to have much difficulty in the matter. But he, too, understands that the last fortress—not excluding the House of Lords—in which sex disqualification will survive must surely be the Church.

It will be noticed, indeed, that the words sex disqualification are carefully avoided. There is apparently a desire not to state the case quite so bluntly, though the disqualification still remains. The grounds for refusal are given as theological, though we are not told what are the theological principles which constitute the insuperable obstacles. Many of the Bishops themselves do not accept these principles—which are not disclosed. It is apparently fear of making a departure from “the Universal Custom of the Catholic Church,” which weighs down the scale most heavily. But could there be a more question-begging epithet than “the Universal Custom of the Catholic Church?” If Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists accept the principle of admitting women to full ministry, are they not part of the Catholic Church? If changes are ever to be made or new precedents to be created, must not some part of the Catholic Church be the first to make a “departure”? “The simultaneous propulsion of the whole body is not the normal movement of that body, except when healthy movement is suspended by paralysis.” Are we to concede the right of making precedents solely to those parts of the Catholic Church least likely to make them? Has not the Church of England, when it really wanted to do so, played ducks and drakes with “Catholic Custom”? The memorandum, to which I have alluded, states: “When it (the Church of England) deliberately authorised the marriage

of the clergy after as well as before they had been ordained to any of the three Holy Orders of the Catholic Ministry, there was as little Catholic precedent for this momentous change as there is to-day for admitting women to the Priesthood."

The somewhat muddled arguments, which we discern in the brief sentences of the Lambeth Committee's report, have been answered again and again, but argument, as we know, is largely governed by psychological factors, and it is to a gradual change in the psychological situation to which we must look for the disappearance of the prejudice which marshals these ineffective arguments. The reply which women can give is in the end unanswerable—the sense of vocation—the firm conviction that some of them are being called by the Holy Spirit to the Ministry. Here is the testimony of one woman:

"I have no objection whatever to making public that I would have applied for ordination had I been a man. I have spent the last twenty-three years searching blindly every known means for its equivalent as far as is possible for a woman. You are doubtless well aware how far the Church has tried to help, and how far to hinder, in this effort to realise one's vocation. I see no reason whatever for keeping the matter in any way secret or mysterious; it is for the authorities of the Church to explain why they have tried to "quench the spirit" of God, not for us to be silent in the matter, so it seems to me."

Arguments far more weighty than these employed at Lambeth would fail to defeat in the long run a sense of vocation such as this. What havoc history and vocation play with arguments. There were, apparently, most decisive arguments why Joan of Arc should not wear male attire and lead the armies of France, but the sense of vocation triumphed over them. There were most "decisive" arguments

brought forward by the Reformers against a woman reigning when Queen Mary ascended the throne. They described woman's rule as "a monster in nature and disorder amongst men." They changed their tune when Queen Elizabeth succeeded her—not very tactfully it must be admitted; but still they admitted a new precedent—a kind of *tour de force* on the part of God:

"I that could make Daniel, a suckling babe, to judge better than the wisest lawyers, a brute beast to reprehend the folly of a prophet, and poor fishers to confound the great clerks of the world—cannot I make a woman to be a good ruler over you?"

What strange tricks time plays with decisive arguments! St. Thomas Aquinas, who frankly admitted that a woman can be a prophet, and that to be a prophet is a greater thing than to be a priest, found a decisive argument against her admission to the priesthood on the ground that, whereas a priest must wear a tonsure, St. Paul recommended women to wear long hair. I do not think the argument from the tonsure figures at all largely to-day, but I wonder what succeeding generations will think of some of the arguments to which we attach still greater weight.

Since the Priesthood is still closed, we turn again to the report to see what use the Church of England proposes to make of the ministry of women in these restricted circumstances.

The order of Deaconess is recognised and the functions slightly extended. The Deaconess may now baptise not simply in emergency but "in virtue of her office." She may take the office of the Churching of Women, she may assist in the preparation of candidates for baptism and confirmation, read morning and evening prayer, and, with the license of the Bishop, preach, except at the service of the Holy Communion. On the other hand, if we look back

to the Report of Lambeth, 1920, we see that, except in the matter of the Churching of Women, all these privileges have already been granted, and so seldom put into practice that in 1930 they seem to read as new. The disappointment, which may be felt about the refusal of higher functions, must not bind us to the gradual opening of wider opportunities for women's work. The ordained Deaconess—even if the Episcopate now seems to hesitate to admit that she is in "Holy" Orders—can render great service to the Church within the imposed limits of her office. The difficulty has hitherto lain with the existence of prejudice on the part of clergy and laity in making full use of her services. Sometimes, too, the Deaconess herself has acquiesced too easily in that looser view of her office, which would make her little more than an indeterminate parish worker.

It must be admitted that some of the women, whom the Church most needs, will never become "women deacons," because the higher order is closed to them, just as many men would refuse to become deacons if there was no opportunity of becoming priests. They prefer, if possible, to serve the Church in some other capacity rather than enter upon a ministry which seems to them inconclusive and maimed. In this connection the words of the Lambeth Committee on Deaconesses ^{are} ~~is~~ significant:

"Our inquiries show us that the number of women asking for ordination as Deaconesses is comparatively small, and that far more women of the stamp and qualifications envisaged find scope for their gifts in other ways."

In the circumstances this is not to be wondered at. But for those to whom the order of deaconess in its present form appeals, there is considerable scope if the goodwill of clergy and people can be secured. Efforts will have to be made to secure this goodwill in the comparatively few Churches where deaconesses are at work. There are not many as

yet wherein their limited services are made use of to the full. Sometimes a man, because he is a man, is sought for at all costs to perform the office for which the Deaconess has been duly licensed. Such procedure tends to lessen the sympathy which might be felt with people who complain of the shortness of their staff, and tends to lessen still further the number of women willing to apply for ordination.

The most interesting and the most hopeful of the resolutions dealing with the Ministry of Women is the one which introduces the subject. It is greatly to be regretted that the subsequent resolutions dash to the ground some of the hopes which it raises, and narrow the spirit in which it is to be interpreted. As it will be necessary to discuss it at some length, it may here be given in full:

“The Conference wishes to insist on the great importance of offering to women of ability and education, who have received adequate special training, posts which provide full scope for their powers and bring to them real partnership with those who direct the work of the Church, and genuine responsibility for their share of it, whether in parish or diocese; so that such women may find in the Church’s service a sphere for the exercise of their capacity.”

I am afraid that in certain quarters some of these fine phrases will receive a somewhat ironical welcome. “Full scope, real partnership, genuine responsibility,” will read a little strangely to those who identify them with admission to full ministry in the Church. Even to those who may be content to accept the Deaconess order as for women the one and only Order of the Ministry, the words will seem a little high flown when they discover that, though a licensed Lay Reader may administer the chalice at the Holy Communion service, an ordained Deaconess may not. It is only when we dismiss from our minds all questions of orders

for women—in the solution of which for the present the Anglican Church has lost its way—that we can hope to do justice to the terms and meaning of the resolution.

It is obvious that the Conference really does desire to secure the services of women of ability and education who can work in a professional capacity for the Church. It is, I believe, one of the best ways in which not only the shortage of clergy can be relieved, but in which work that the clergy are not competent to do, and which needs urgently to be done, can be undertaken with good hope of success. It is a method in which I have been interested for many years, and, while Vicar of West Ham, in those experimental days when we were all filled with reforming zeal and were expecting a new Church as well as a new heaven and a new earth—we succeeded in establishing a hostel in which University women could live and become paid members of the parochial staff.

Our idea was not to bring women's work into the parish independently of parochial organisation, but to modify parochial organisation in such a way as to provide a channel through which might flow the best service that women could give. We were convinced that the reform of parochial life could not be accomplished from outside, but through the loosing of new ideas and new spiritual activities from within. In carrying out this parochial venture, we frankly recognised that it meant the granting of a new status to women, the departmentalising of parochial work, and the recognition of the equal responsibilities of women with men in the spheres entrusted to them.

Some words which I wrote then acquire a new significance in the light of the Lambeth Resolution:

“The effort which is now being made is tentative, and it is hoped that, if the experiment is successful, it may be made in many large parishes. At present the parochial sphere offers but few inducements to women of religious

impulse who have their profession to follow and their future to consider. Ours is a pioneer effort to open up the field where others may follow later on to do better and bigger things for the Kingdom of God. We propose, at any rate, so far as we go in the exploration of this new field, to remove the disability of inadequate stipend and the slur of sweated work. Whether women remain in 'our field' or return to practise their profession in other social spheres, it will not be because of the inadequate pay that the Church has offered them."

During the succeeding years we managed—with generous help from many quarters—to make good our resolve to pay adequate, though far from princely salaries, and the recognition of the equal responsibilities of women with men was honourably observed by the staff of curates who worked in this adventure of fellowship and service. Looking back, I can see how much we, as men, learned from carrying on our work in close touch with professional women, animated by the same spirit of service, and possessing a technical knowledge of children and adolescents, of teaching and dramatics, of relief and social welfare, far greater than our own. In those years I shed innumerable prejudices and learnt innumerable lessons. No great parish can really be effectively worked without some such close co-operation and co-ordination of the work of men and women.

The resolution, it will be noticed, speaks of the parish as well as of the diocese, and of the importance of securing women of ability and education in both. It is the stress laid upon the parish which is really new. Apart from the work of the religious orders, which include many women of culture as well as vocation, the parishes have been badly served in this matter. It has too often been assumed that the only kind of work which women can usefully do in a parish is that of the district visiting type, which may involve no more than bill distributing or, on the other hand, may

rise to pastoral visitation of a very valuable kind. The result has been that the number of educated women who looked to the parish as a possible sphere for service has been unduly limited. Their training has not specially fitted them for the traditional kind of work, nor has natural inclination urged them to it. It is important that the kind of work which a live parish can offer should be made widely known. It can provide anyone who has made the art of teaching a study with the opportunity of training teachers and reforming Sunday Schools. It can offer to the student of social problems the most intimate opportunities for social survey work, an open field for clinics, play centres and clubs.

I shall probably be told that the real difficulty in the matter is one of finance. How serious that is every parson knows, and I have one or two suggestions to make in conclusion on that matter. On the other hand, no solution of the financial difficulty will bring able women with a clear sense of vocation into parish life except on the basis of "real partnership," and after they have been convinced that there is work worth doing. A man who is worthy of being a man wants "a man's job." A woman who is worthy of being a woman wants "a woman's job." It is by comparing the difference in popular interpretation of the two phrases—"a man's job" and "a woman's job"—that we discover how far we have to go before such words as "full scope, real partnership and genuine responsibility" mean what they ought to mean in relation to women's work.

The feelings of "the dominant male" are not extinguished in the clergy by any grace of orders. Far from it. They are usually accentuated. Quite a large proportion of us seem to accept quite readily the theory of the inferiority of a woman's brain and the minor importance of a woman's work. Until we have chastened a little our natural tendency to dominate and learnt the general rule of fellowship in work, experiments of the kind, to which I have alluded, would be irritating on both sides.

But in the name of the Church—in the name of that larger Church which is to be—is it not worth while seeking to bring the very best that both men and women can offer into its official service? The fact that the way to full ministry is still barred creates both for those who are satisfied, and those who deplore it, an urgent responsibility to see as far as possible that the loyalty and affection of able women for the Church is not alienated beyond recovery. We must show that the Church has need of them, and in this, as in so many other matters, the word is “That thou doest, do quickly.”

We must show, too, that, as we can pay for ordination candidates, and as we can somehow or other raise salaries for curates, so also in their case we can pay adequately for what we value. £200 to £250 is the least salary for which we should expect a professional woman to work for the Church. Such a sum will be considerably below what she could obtain elsewhere, and no one without a sense of vocation will be likely to accept it. Below that sum, the Church is tacitly asking for a reduction in a standard of living which the clergy are not prepared willingly to accept for themselves.

Can it be done? I have two suggestions to make—apart from the usual methods—by which we all manage to raise money for any object about which we are tremendously keen. First of all, the diocese and such societies as the Church Pastoral Aid, which give grants to the clergy for maintaining their staff, should radically revise their scale. Why is the grant for a woman worker invariably less than that for a curate? The assumption is that the standard of living for the two varies accordingly. Why should it? If both are unmarried, the needs of a curate and of a professional woman are very similar. In the scale of grants, there is embedded the principle that, when a man and a woman are working on the staff of a parish, it may be assumed that they are of different types and accustomed to a different standard of living.

Such assumptions must go, if the diocese or the society is to take the Lambeth Resolution seriously and help the clergy to carry it out. With the present shortage of clergy, hundreds of grants, nominally assigned to curates, are never taken up; yet, if a first-class woman worker is obtainable for the parish, the "curate" grant is not available, but only one which is much smaller, and which leaves the parochial clergyman too large a margin to make up. A revision in the scale of grants, in deference to the policy so clearly outlined in Resolution 66, is the first necessity.

Secondly, I revert to my idea (suggested in the chapter on Rationalisation), of a federation of parishes combining to pool their grants and to work out a common policy over a common area. One first-class woman, responsible to the executive of the federation, would be worth half a dozen inefficient workers. Her capacity to train voluntary workers for the area, and to establish them in the strategic posts of parish life, would abundantly justify the initial expenditure, and the initial surrender of sovereign rights. The test of a good worker in parish life is not always how much she can do herself, but how much she can teach others to do. From that point of view, to secure a worker of "A" grade (to use the technical phrase of the Interdiocesan Council of Women's Work) in a particular area is the first step to ordered progress. With the acceptance of the principle of federation, the economic difficulties can be overcome.

There remains one difficulty, which is alluded to in the words of the Resolution "who have received adequate special training," and of which the Church might well take notice. There is no short suitable course of training, either in Theology or Pastoralia, for professional women wishing to enter the sphere of parochial life. In the case of those who worked with me at West Ham, by force of natural ability, they soon adapted themselves to new surroundings and learnt parochial psychology. But they often explained

to me that college-trained women are at a disadvantage in entering parochial life, and that, if the practice were to extend, some kind of preliminary training should be provided. While it is better, as we concluded, to risk something rather than to go on indefinitely losing the services of such women to the Church, it would be well if the Church made the necessary provision. The results which were achieved in at least one parish without such training indicate how much might be expected with more foresight and better organisation.

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH AND SEX

"Sex is an ever-living fire that nothing will extinguish. It is like that flame which Moses saw on Mount Horeb, burning the bush which yet was not consumed. 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground'."

Havelock Ellis.

"The Cross looks grim. But one thing is sure; that dream of perfect bliss which lures us to evade it will not come true. The primrose path of dalliance is early overrun with briars; and if we must be pierced with thorns, it is more kingly to wear them as a crown."

Streeter, "Moral Adventure."

Lambeth Conference—Resolution No. 9.

The Conference believes that the conditions of modern life call for a fresh statement from the Christian Church on the subject of sex. It declares that the functions of sex, as a God-given factor in human life, are essentially noble and creative. Responsibility in regard to their right use needs the greater emphasis in view of widespread laxity of thought and conduct in all these matters.

THERE is no subject on which the Church has given less guidance to its young people than on the subject of sex. It has been for a long time a prominent conspirator in the great conspiracy of silence. Nor can it claim any credit for the passing of the age in which both cruel secrecy and romantic hypocrisy surrounded the subject. The taboos are now gone, torn down by an age which has revolted against Victorian ideals, and the Church is compelled to speak now or cease to be a teaching Church. Looking back

upon the past, it is almost inconceivable that so little was done through official channels to relieve the tension caused by ignorance or to relate the sex life to Christian thought and feeling. Little more was offered to people by way of teaching than that sex outside marriage was concupiscence and that inside marriage it became part of a legal contract. The majority of young people grew up without any teaching or training on the subject, except that which came to them through muddy channels; thousands of brides wept through ignorance and fear on the day before their marriage, and numbers of married people knew no more about a Christian technique of marriage than that the Old Testament had told them to increase and multiply. Everyone knows for himself cases where the shock of new and unexpected knowledge has thrown adolescents temporarily off their balance, and where married people have suffered grievously both in body and mind because of the ignorance which was supposed to protect their pre-marital purity.

Various factors in our modern civilisation have impelled the Church to make haste to formulate a Christian doctrine of sex, just as other scientific facts have impelled it to formulate anew the Christian doctrine of God. These particular factors under the heading of "Modern Advance" have been summed up by Mr. Havelock Ellis as follows: (1) the progress of Mendelian investigations into the mechanism of the sexual process; (2) the progress of psycho-analytical investigation and its treatment of sex in life; (3) the new enthusiasm for sex education, and (4) the discovery of new methods for the control of human reproduction.

But other factors of a moral and social kind have played a greater or at least an equal part in altering the attitude of the Church and exerting pressure on the Bishops to speak out. There is the breakdown of religious sanctions described by Professor Lippman in his *Preface to Morals*. The spectacle in Russia of a "philosophic mechanism"—which seeks to destroy all allegiance except to the State,

and which views man as a machine, side by side with the growth in the United States of a romantic idealisation of sex demanding an emotional life free of all social constraints—has compelled world-wide attention to the subject. In both these “outlying territories of our civilisation” (as they are described by Christopher Dawson), can be seen the unfettered development of economic forces, uncontrolled by religious sanctions, disintegrating the home and family. In England traces of these diverse views of life, producing similar disastrous results, can be seen by any casual observer. It was high time that the Church sought to help its members in the present state of unrest, confusion and disorder.

At first sight it may seem as if the Bishops have said very little that was new, but it is the new *attitude* which is important. They recognise that “a new day has dawned, in which sex and sex matters are emerging from the mists of suspicion and even shame, in which for centuries they have been enveloped, into the clear atmosphere of candour, honesty and truth.” They strike the right note in the first declaration that the functions of sex “are essentially noble and creative.” Here at once we get away from the almost intolerable atmosphere of the unrevised Prayer Book which describes marriage as a “remedy against sin.” It is the implications of such a phrase that have warped so much that has been written about sex in the name of the Christian Church. Sex is good and not evil. It is a God-given factor in human life. It is not to be thought of as something to be kept in the cellar or the basement of the soul’s household. It is not to be ignored or neglected with the advance of civilisation. It must keep pace with the other factors which are essential to the development of man’s spiritual and social life. Animal passion is not sinful, but, as Mary Ware Dunnett points out in her essay on “Sex Enlightenment for Modern Youth,” “mere animalistic sex expression has no more place in worth-while civilisation than would mud huts

serve as modern homes or barter in the place of commerce or the pack horse in the place of the automobile."¹

Sex in itself—though its functions may now ^{rightly} ~~regally~~ be described as noble and creative—is non-committal as regards moral purpose apart from the developing spirit of man. It is man's spiritual consciousness that compels him to direct his sex instincts to ends of spiritual value. It is the recognition of an eternal background to life that forces him to live his physical life on a constantly higher plane of thought and feeling, and plunges him into those struggles to achieve internal harmony—from which secular writers seek to deliver him by a series of short cuts. "Return," says D. H. Lawrence, "to the spontaneous natural sexuality of the animal . . . it is the intrusion of the mind that makes sex rotten." Abolish the sense of permanence and everlastingness—says the modern poetry of sex—and narrow down your ideas of romance accordingly. Such is the characteristic teaching of Miss Millay's poem "Mariposa,"

Butterflies are white and blue,
In this field we wander through,
Suffer me to take your hand,
Death comes in a day or two.

All the things we ever knew
Will be ashes in that hour;
Mark the transient butterfly,
How he hangs upon the flower.

Suffer me to take your hand,
Suffer me to cherish you
Till the dawn is in the sky,
Whether I be false or true,
Death comes in a day or two.

But man cannot bring himself for long to find satisfaction in these short cuts. He cannot go back to the animal stage from which he came; he cannot help pressing forward to the absolute and the eternal. Cost what it may, he has

¹ *Sex and Civilisation*. Edited by Havelock Ellis.

eventually to seek to relate his sex life to the world of spiritual values.

This is the ground on which rests the true Christian teaching of sex, and which justifies the stress laid by the Bishops upon responsibility in the right use of its functions. It is "life on the grand scale" (to use the words of the report), to which the Church calls mankind. "A new dimension is introduced." It is to be regretted that some of the illuminating phrases in the committee's report that strike fire like flint on tinder cannot find their way into their first Resolution which deals directly with sex. It is also to be regretted that some note of sympathy with youth and its difficulties, so largely increased by the effects of our modern civilisation, has not been inserted. The resolution is a little bald and dull, unimpeachable in morals and heavy in tone. Such are the characteristics of most weighty documents whose purpose is to inform and to define rather than to inspire. It succeeds, at any rate, in what it sets out to say—which is not quite true of all the seventy-five resolutions in the book. It asks for and claims from all of us a due sense of responsibility.

Irresponsibility is the setting of the sex experiments of a great many young people. There is something infinitely pathetic about their eager grasping after something which may relieve the monotony of life by a sensuous thrill. It is impossible to think of them as essentially vicious. Ignorance, thoughtlessness, the desire to escape from the mechanism of life prompt actions which the experienced person can only regard as folly. The storms and passions of youth, the power of sex attraction, the violence of sex appetite in certain types of youth are almost forgotten by mature middle age. But the pain and the fret are severe in late adolescence, and the sense of responsibility in the light of spiritual values has not always been sufficiently aroused to give the young person a fair chance of victory in the mental and moral struggle which ensues.

All who are familiar with the stories of these young people, or who have helped in any way to repair the damage or retrieve the tragedy, know how often these young people have been as much sinned against as sinning. In the case of those who come from our poorer homes, overcrowding, the lack of privacy, often the lack of decency have completely blunted the spiritual perceptions which give to sex its finer meaning. The factories, in which they work, are often foul with the conversation which makes sex cheap, and which separates it from all sense of responsibility. In the paucity of interests available, the sex thrill, of which no economic circumstances can deprive them, however much it may rob them of others, stands out as easily attainable and overwhelmingly attractive. In the case of those who come from homes with a superior social background, it will often be found that it is the complete lack of idealism in the home itself, the lack of all higher values, the general subservience to comfort and pleasure which have dulled the sense of responsibility and sapped the roots of character.

It is much to be desired that all, whose privilege it is to commend the Christian standard of sex, should thoroughly understand and sympathise with the difficulties of those to whom they preach it. How else can confidence be secured or that sense of trust be created out of which arises the possibility of new moral effort? Some further stress on the necessity of a "right approach" to all who stand in need of the Church's help or guidance might well have formed the subject of a Lambeth resolution.

This need of a right approach is all the more important, for in the long run it is nothing more or less than the doctrine of the Cross—so glorious when it is believed in and accepted—so difficult when viewed from the outside—which the Church has to preach to young people between the period of adolescence and marriage. I am not forgetting all the excellent methods by which youth may be taught to sublimate its sex instincts, nor what a large part clean, healthy,

vigorous open-air life (denied, unfortunately to so many) may play in the control and disciplining of the appetite. Yet in the last analysis it is the doctrine of the Cross of Jesus by which the Church stands or falls—the proclamation to the world that to suffer for a noble end is better than self-gratification, that a crown of thorns is sometimes better than a garland of roses, and that to forego a sex thrill for the sake of some higher value which we perceive in personality or life is often the only way even for passionate and glorious youth.

I sincerely trust that I may escape the imputation of cheap and easy phrases, but, in my deliberate judgment, the teaching of the Cross is the only way out. The sex experiments of the young, where they are not tragic, are merely cheap. "Light love," says Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, in her essay on "Women in Transition," "has no synthesis. It leads to nothing save an addiction to more light love; while sex expression without any love at all is too poor a thing to satisfy, even momentarily, a really civilised human being." Even D. H. Lawrence, speaking of the sex-free bohemians of to-day, goes on to speak of "the terrible dreariness and depression of modern Bohemia, and the inward dreariness and emptiness of so many young people of to-day." Free love is not satisfying, but even if it were (and there must be thousands of cases where, for the moment, for its sake the world seems well lost) it stands condemned by the Cross. It is the Cross, with its subordination of all life to the end in view and its revelation of cost and sacrifice as an element in abiding love, that remains the touchstone of Christian experience.

Responsibility may not be an altogether inspiring word with which to approach youth in its struggle for self-mastery, but it is an honest and substantial word, and, viewed in the light of the Cross, it may be found wholly satisfying. Life can be tested at every point by a growing sense of responsibility. To teach it and to acquire it is

pre-eminently worth while. To be able to accept it and to be worthy of it is a proof of true manhood and womanhood. To be in a position to handle successfully all the creative functions with which our humanity is so richly endowed, including the functions of sex, is an ambition worth setting before the mind of youth dazzled by the richness of its own powers. Responsibility—that is, the capacity to “answer” to each succeeding challenge of life—is the essence of the whole matter.

Much more full is the treatment which the Lambeth report gives to the responsibility of parents, teachers and clergy to provide sex instruction of the right kind for boys and girls growing up, and for young people about to be married. This is a duty which has been shockingly neglected by Church parents, which is omitted from the official curriculum of Church (and Council) Schools and which has only recently received much attention from the clergy. The pages of the report, bringing home to all concerned their responsibilities in the matter, are amongst the most important in the book.

It may be convenient to deal with each of these three “teaching bodies” separately. Parents (if Christian people and themselves reasonably well instructed) are obviously those on whom the primary responsibility for teaching rests. But, unless the confidence of the children is secured early, a drift away from the parents often takes place at adolescence. Children who come to the knowledge of sex facts from muddled sources, frequently have their minds poisoned with regard to their own parents, and are never quite comfortable with them if the subject is discussed. Even after the period of storm and stress is over, the gulf which has arisen is not always bridged. I have often talked over these matters with young people who have excellent Christian parents, yet find it quite impossible to seek their advice on questions on which they would naturally be competent to give it. Psychologists can, no doubt, supply the technical explanation. It would

seem, however, that any natural inhibition which may exist is gravely strengthened by the failure of parents during the early days of childhood to satisfy in a natural and serious manner the child's interest and growing curiosity in sex. The moral would seem to be to begin early. There are plenty of books and pamphlets provided by the Mothers' Union and by the British Council of Social Hygiene which Christian parents can make use of with complete confidence.

All the same, it is well known that many parents are quite careless or quite incompetent, or without the leisure or privacy ever to undertake this task. It is to the schools that we must look for the fulfilment of many responsibilities more proper to parents, and very often, if ever it is to be fulfilled, of this one in particular. "There is grave need," says the Report, "that in schools of all types such instruction should be given as will enable the children, particularly as they approach adolescence, to look at the whole question of sex whether in plants, animals or men, in its right setting as essentially part of God's unceasing creative activity."

It is highly probable that the Board of Education will establish such teaching, and voluntary schools will be compelled to follow suit if the Church presses vigorously for this reform. The opposition does not come so much from the teachers as from the parents, themselves educated under the old conspiracy of silence. It will be necessary to deal wisely and sympathetically with their prejudices lest any mistake at the start should produce a reaction. The introduction of the teaching is not quite so simple an affair as it may seem at first sight, for in a matter of this kind character and personality are vital factors. Nor does it follow that the young unmarried teacher (the type that predominates in the schools) is the kind of person best fitted to give the instruction. The choice and the preliminary training of any selected for such work requires great care. It will be noticed that the Bishops wisely assert the importance

of the general principle without attempting to enter, at this stage, upon details.

When we come to the responsibility of the clergy, we must include with them all who share in the teaching office of the parish. Thus in every Sunday School there ought to be at least one teacher (if not all), who has had some training in sex hygiene, and whose services can be available when needed. Bible teaching cannot go far without meeting these problems, and it is essential that right interpretations should be given here as naturally and unself-consciously as in any other subject. Club workers in the same way should have some training in this subject. I have seen it asserted that, if such training were more generally given and the reactions of the students proposing to take up social work were carefully watched by the lecturer, many potential social workers would be eliminated. In the cities, at any rate, such training can easily be arranged. Courses of lectures, for example, in Birmingham are constantly being given under the auspices of the British Council for Social Hygiene.

As regards the responsibility of the clergy themselves, more will be said in the next chapter, which deals with the subject of marriage. What has been said of our assistants largely applies to ourselves. Perhaps it is easier for us to acquire the knowledge and necessary experience through our wider knowledge of suitable books and through our many opportunities of meeting Christian doctors and social workers of all kinds. The best training is not always that which is supplied through lectures. What is learnt through intimate conversation with understanding people and through the personal touch of sincere pastoral work is of unique value. But a plea may be made for far more definite training in the case of ordinands. The Bishops recommend the increased study of moral theology at the theological colleges, but this, in itself, hardly meets the situation. I would plead for further study of psychology, physiology,

biology and all associated sciences which deal with sex. In the deplorable lack of women priests to undertake the spiritual charge of adolescent girls especially in parishes where confession is practised, it is essential that the fullest training should be given to ordinands who may be called upon to perform the most unsuitable tasks. It will be some time before the wise restriction suggested by the Bishops becomes fully operative in the case of the younger clergy: "Generally speaking, we think that, unless and until they have been carefully trained and licensed for the purpose, the younger clergy should not advise women and girls in regard to sexual matters, whether in confession or otherwise. . . ." Even when this much-needed reform is effected, the tasks that remain will call for a more highly specialised training than is at present provided.

It is not possible to expect the Report to deal with every type of responsibility for "sex instruction," but I could wish that a strong appeal had been made to the theatre, to the cinema and the music hall to co-operate with Christian influence in raising the general thought and feeling about sex. All the efforts of the Church to create a normal attitude to sex, and relate sex interest in a healthy way to the other interests of life, is nullified by the exaggerated importance which is given by these popular institutions to the sex thrill. It is not that the cinema preaches vice. From one point of view it is appallingly and unhealthily "moral." Virtue is always triumphant and vice consistently defeated. Nothing could be more unlike real life! But the cinema revels in the more artificial and sensuous side of our civilisation, and the sex thrill is enthroned and deified in it. To a large extent it is the same with the theatre and the music hall, without, as in the case of the cinema, its peculiar "moral" tradition.

Is it not possible for the Church to strengthen the hands of Christian managers, artistes and proprietors, who are trying to raise the tone of public entertainments, and to

make the kind of corporate appeal on behalf of the best interests of youth that would strike the imagination of the trade, and appeal to the conscience of the shareholders? Without the co-operation of these great forces in our social life, our task, humanly speaking, is like that of Sisyphus. The stone comes rolling back to the foot of the mountain. There is a tendency to think too closely, even in Lambeth reports, of the Church as an institution run by clergy and teachers and to forget the vast influence which may be exerted for the Church, and for all that the Church stands for, by Christian laity at strategic points of business and commerce. It is well to make them conscious of their responsibilities and to make them feel that the Church believes in the reality of their Christian profession. They need encouragement in the extraordinarily difficult circumstances in which they find themselves. They cannot go very far in the direction that we and they desire unless they can bring a large part of the trade and a large part of the public with them. It is no easy matter to change the habits of a people which has been long accustomed to tolerate or enjoy a prurient treatment of sex as part of its evening's entertainment. Nor can one strike a happy mean all at once between eliminating the unhealthy sex thrill and retaining a reasonable amount of sex appeal, without which life for normal young people would be very dull indeed.

But the effort is worth making, and there are people in these professions who would respond whole-heartedly to such an attempt to raise the tone of the treatment of sex in public entertainments a few pegs nearer the ideal. Such a venture would be led, not by official Church leaders, but by Christian men rising to their responsibilities within the profession itself. It is a parallel effort of that kind which would give stability and permanence to our parochial efforts.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHURCH AND MARRIAGE

"In marriage the richest range of love lies beyond the physical and romantic. It must pass through these and include these, but it does not attain its maturity until these are felt to be beautiful and necessary incidents rather than essentials."

Kenneth Ingram.

Lambeth Conference: Resolution No. 10.

The Conference believes that in the exalted view of marriage taught by our Lord is to be found the solution of the problems with which we are faced.

THERE is a "welter" of talk about marriage to-day. Literature teems with suggestions for the solution of what is called the Sex problem. It is difficult to tabulate the list of "cure-all" remedies. Ellen Key, of Sweden, is the great apostle of the right to maternity—which is another way of putting "the right to bear a child in or out of marriage." Judge Lindsay advocates companionate marriage which, as Chesterton remarked, "is not marriage and will very soon cease to be companionate." It has been described as "the recognised union of young people, dissolvable at will and without social stigma, divorced from housekeeping, financial responsibility or offspring, and involving instruction in contraceptives." Mr. Bertrand Russell recommends progressive periods of sex life: (a) free sex experiment with contraceptives for both sexes; (b) monogamous marriage for those who wish children; (c) a later period following on the birth of the desired children in which both partners, without jealousy, may renew their sex adventures. Miss Fanny Hurst recommends a system

of visiting marriage conducted from separate roof trees. To these I suppose must be added the Communist solution of the State taking charge of all children and the Russian system of casual marriage or no marriage as preferred.¹

England is not at the moment greatly affected by this welter. We are not a volatile people like the Americans, eager to live up to its reputation for interest in "new stuff." We are not a dour and destructive people like the Russian Bolsheviks. The national dislike of "over muchness," quite apart from moral consideration, helps to keep the nation on an even keel. It is perhaps surprising that the Lambeth Conference, representative of so many different types of civilisation, did not speak more plainly of these cure-all remedies, and argue the case for Christian marriage at greater length. As regard the British islands, however, the omission is not serious. The value of marriage as a permanent institution is in no great danger. The modifications desired are of a totally different kind to the sweeping and destructive changes which have been introduced elsewhere. Young people of serious and thoughtful purpose, who have tried the experiment of married life together without the marriage bond, have usually ended in accepting it. The careless and irresponsible adventurers have not brought back such good reports of their experience as to encourage great numbers to follow their example. We may assume that monogamous marriage with some standard of Christian valuation will continue to be generally received and accepted in this country.

The task before the Church is a two-fold one; first, to teach the Christian view of marriage to prepare its young people for entering upon it and to help them to make their marriage socially and spiritually successful;

¹ I am indebted for this summary to Miss Beatrice Hale's excellent chapter on "Women in Transition" in *Sex and Civilization*, edited by Havelock Ellis.

secondly, to discover how best to deal with cases which have gone wrong and in which the marriage has proved a failure. It will be convenient to discuss these separately.

It is often assumed that everyone is familiar with the Christian view of marriage. Its ideal is rightly stated to be that of a lifelong partnership of two people who "take each other for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and cherish till death us do part." "Therefore shall a man leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife and they twain shall be one flesh." But there is more in the theory of Christian marriage than a lifelong union. It is a union with religious sanction, a recognition of the spiritual values which sex possesses for Christian people, a union begun and continued in God. "Lawful" marriage is not identical with Christian marriage. Though monogamous, it may be on quite a different level of principle.

The failure to distinguish between lawful marriage and Christian marriage lies at the root of many of our difficulties connected with divorce. It is sufficient, however, at the moment to emphasise that in teaching the doctrine of Christian marriage the sense of vocation rather than its permanence is the element which makes it distinctively Christian. The eternal background—giving a peculiar value to all our choices, contracts and relationships of the time-process—is essential to our view of marriage. It is not simply for the mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other, but that they may have these things together "in the Lord." It is not simply that children may be brought into the world under conditions most favourable (socially) to their development, but that they may share in our spiritual heritage. Marriage for the Christian is related to all his most intimate beliefs about God in Christ and all his most intimate hopes for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

It is important that this should be kept in mind, for often when preparation for marriage is spoken of as something which it is incumbent upon the Church to give, it is supposed to mean little more than sex facts and the ordinary obligations of good citizenship. Both these are of the utmost importance. As the Bishops say: "We also think that there should be special preparation for marriage for persons between their engagement and their marriage." This "special preparation" may in many cases concern itself with physical facts and social implications. But above and beyond all this comes the constant need for deepening the sense of vocation and of presenting marriage as a new field for service, a new estate full of the most glorious possibilities into which God Himself is leading His young friends. Serious as are the consequences of the defect of technical knowledge with which many people enter upon married life, experience proves that where the sense of Christian vocation is present and Christian character has been formed, in quite a wonderful way difficulties are triumphed over, adjustments are made, good habits are formed and a happy married life secured.

This ought not to be taken as a reason for putting off the reading of helpful literature, or consultation with a Christian physician, or a talk with an experienced friend, priest or lay; but to many, who—through reticence or through the conventions in which they have been brought up—have already suffered, it may be a consolation to know how much of the damage can be repaired through the stability of Christian character.

With regard to the responsibilities of married life, the Bishops have much to say that is useful, and it is said, as might be expected, with understanding and dignity. The high sense of vocation is preserved throughout, and the background is always that of the thoughtful cultivation of mutual love. Parenthood is set forth in its true light as a creative process, in which we come as near as it is pos-

sible for mortals to come into touch with the creative activities of God. 'It gives food for awe as well as thought that in that most momentous action—the creation of a human soul—man and woman are in direct co-operation with God.' The value of a number of children in the home, not only for the joy but for the training in character which they bring to parents is plainly set forth. The importance of other children for the education of each child, so often neglected by those who would foolishly concentrate upon keeping up their standard of living in order to give the best to a single child, is strongly emphasised. Nor is there, as often happens in pronouncements of the Church on marriage, any failure to recognise that the consummation of marriage has, quite apart from parenthood, a spiritual value of its own. Perhaps the most striking, because the least expected, admission in the Resolutions dealing with the subject is "that intercourse between husband and wife as the consummation of marriage has a value of its own within that sacrament, and that thereby married love is enhanced and its character strengthened." This particular sentence, as we shall see, has a very important bearing upon the subject of birth control.

On this vexed question the Bishops speak with a caution which ends in a regrettable lack of clearness. It is evident that they have been persuaded that there are certain cases in which the use of contraceptives are permissible. There exist (we are told) "moral situations which may make it obligatory" to use other methods of family limitation than that of abstinence, but we are not told what are the moral situations or the moral obligations.

Everyone who is familiar with the extent to which these contraceptive methods are being used outside marriage in a way which cuts at the root of all sense of Christian vocation and responsibility, will sympathise with the caution of the Bishops, who rightly fear to give the appearance of countenancing what they deeply deplore. They will also

have the sympathy of all Christian people in the stress which they lay upon the need of discipline and selfcontrol as an essential part of married love. Their strong condemnation of the use of any methods of conception control from motives of selfishness, luxury, or mere convenience is justified by any reading of Christianity. But where regret will be felt is in the lack of clearness to relate the guarded permission for the use of contraceptives to any of the principles for which Christian marriage may stand. As this resolution reads—in spite of the words “moral obligation”—it looks too like a concession to human weakness or, at best, an unavoidable necessity.

I suggest that in the Bishops' own words—that “the consummation of marriage has a value of its own within that sacrament”—lies the principle of which they are in search. What is called the act of procreation might also be called the act of making love, and for the Christian the act with either intention or with both has a spiritual significance. To create children, to bring them happily and healthily into the world under conditions which will most favour mother and child is the joy and the privilege of the Christian father. To give married love and to receive it from his wife, apart from any thought of creative activity, is also the joy and privilege of the Christian husband. In either case whether in procreation or in making love the general rules of health, discipline, wisdom and thoughtfulness will prevail. Here, if the reasoning is right, may be found justification for a guarded use of contraceptives in married life—to allow at times, during periods of abstinence observed for the sake of the right spacing of children, the renewal and deepening of affection through the exercise of married love.

It is far better that the case for birth control should be thus stated in relation to a principle and considered on its merits than that attempts should be made to fit it into a view of married relationships which assumes that the

"obvious method" of control is complete abstinence from intercourse as far as may be necessary. Such attempts leave people with uneasy consciences and a sense of failure in living up to an ideal. It would be far better to follow the way of abstinence than to use contraceptives with the feeling that a higher and nobler path had been refused. There can be no peace of mind in these matters unless the Christian is convinced that his conduct is fully Christian. He cannot go through married life with an anxious and a hang-dog feeling.

Consequently, there can be nothing but respect for those who, rejecting such a theory of married love as I have outlined above, adhere rigidly to the way of abstinence where necessary. Psychologists would say that in many cases it is the only possible line of conduct because of the shock that would be involved in making the mental adjustments to any other course. The way of abstinence has the support of a long Christian tradition behind it, and it is capable of being followed in a Christian spirit—not the spirit of a harsh asceticism but the spirit of triumphant and self-sacrificing love.

But I would urge that the other way also must be allowed as fully Christian for those who, in a new age, have come to view birth and all that concerns it from a scientific as well as a moral point of view, and who at the same time believe that with the development of man's spiritual nature the sexual act has become closely related to his highest and holiest affections. To them complete abstinence during the considerable periods which should intervene for the proper spacing of children presents itself in an immoral light. It is submission to the ideas of a less intelligent age, and a refusal to express an affection which enriches health, deepens character and cements the spiritual bond. At times, therefore, they use contraceptives with deliberate thought and with good conscience, recognising in doing so no break or interruption in their spiritual lives.

It is evident that people who conscientiously adopt this line of reasoning and course of conduct have many pitfalls to avoid which are not to be found in the path of abstinence. Care must be taken that the duties of parenthood are not shirked, and that intercourse does not become synonymous with mere pleasure or convenience. The expression of married love must be regarded as holy and sacred a thing as worship, requiring the right attitude of mind equally with preparedness of body. To make love for Christian people is not a temporary relaxation to the dictates of passion, or an abandonment of a higher to a lower self, but a deliberate spiritual uplifting of passion to an act of physical and spiritual communion.

For a long period to come it may be expected that both types of reasoning and both lines of conduct will be found within the Christian Church. There are æsthetic considerations at present, which in themselves weigh largely as a deterrent to the use of contraceptives—though these will probably one day be overcome. Apart, however, from questions of feeling which have a kind of mediate position in the discussion of the subject, the two lines of reasoning and conduct will continue, and it is much to be hoped that mutual toleration and understanding may be effected. The case for abstinence is not rooted in any teaching of our Lord on the subject, and the argument from Catholic custom becomes increasingly weaker as the difference between Catholic principles and Catholic customs becomes better understood. On the other hand the science of birth control is still in its infancy, its social tendencies need the most careful watching, and its methods are far from satisfactory. The majority of Church people are urgently in need of help, and look not for fulmination from opposing camps, but for a patient arguing of the case in the full light of science and Christian morals.

Meantime the whole force of Christian public opinion will combine to support the resolution of the Bishops which

deals with the scandalous way in which contraceptives are now offered for sale to the general public:

"In view of the widespread and increasing use of contraceptives among the unmarried, and the extension of irregular unions owing to the diminution of any fear of consequences, the Conference presses for legislation forbidding the exposure for sale and the unrestricted advertisement of contraceptives, and placing definite restrictions upon their purchase."

There are other aspects and problems of marriage as well as that of birth control on which Christian people need some guidance. Indeed, there is a danger lest, in emphasising the possibilities and spiritual values of the sex relationship, other relationships should be omitted or ignored. It is possible to take a Freudian view of marriage so that everything is seen in the light of sex, as on the screen pictures. If this should happen no amount of spiritualising of sex will prevent distortion. These other relationships have their place, and though, in the Lambeth report (which deals only with the moral problems of marriage), they cannot well have a place assigned to them, they are intimately bound up with the whole matter.

There are three in particular of which I would say something. First of all the relationships of an intellectual social kind which exist between husband and wife. Love's young dream does not take enough stock of these. That "sanctuary of married bliss," to which the Bishops say the normal boy or girl looks forward, is in their thoughts too highly coloured with sex. The delightful blending of intellectual and social companionship which happy married partners find in married life is not sufficiently before their minds. Neither is the necessity for finding a life partner who will wear well in these matters sufficiently set before them. It needs to be said in the plainest terms that, though

marriage for young people is most undesirable without sex attraction, sex attraction in itself is no guarantee of a happy marriage. That is one of the very hardest things for youth to believe. Young people are always being carried away by the first stirrings of sex attraction. They imagine that this is the "grand passion" when it may only be the first of many tentative efforts of blind nature to push them on to take part in the procreative process of the world. Youth is desperately hardly placed, for, on the other hand, calf-love, as it is called—an almost precociously early love affair—may be the biggest experience of a lifetime.

The whole force of Christian teaching before marriage must be directed not to destroying but to widening the natural basis of marriage. People must be urged to think of natural affinities, common interests, the intellectual and social background common to both partners. Just in so far as we hold an "exalted view of marriage", so far does its realisation become less and less spontaneous and more and more a matter of wise choice. If that could be taught with such sympathy as to secure the consent of the personality of the person taught, many of the tragedies to be dealt with in another chapter would be avoided.

Secondly, young people need to be taught that happy marriage does not mean such fusion of personalities that neither may ever after have any independent interests. Perpetual absorption in each other is the worst way to preserve the romance of married life; yet the advice given to young people in the name of religion often gives them a false ideal of love and loyalty. They narrow their interests and end by boring one another. Mr. Kenneth Ingram in his admirable book, *The Modern Attitude to the Sex Problem*, says:

"One of the tragedies of conventional marriage has been that the domestic emphasis has laid too heavy a concentration upon the relationship of husband and wife. In

some cases, where there is an intellectual comradeship as well as a sexual attachment, the union has stood the strain. But, normally, the partners are thrown too continuously together; they have too few independent interests (especially the wife), the whole affectional force is given too entirely to this single relationship (especially if there are no children) to preserve the romantic element in the marriage, and to keep it fresh and vigorous."

I have a friend who refuses steadily to get married on the ground that he has lost nearly all his much loved friends through marriage. According to his view to keep your friends and to be married are incompatible, and he prefers to keep his friends! This would be a most distressing view of marriage if it were true. It is a useful reminder, however, that we should do well to teach young people that when the Church bids them cleave to one another it does not mean that they may no longer preserve "homogenic ties" within their own sex.

Thirdly there are wider relations still with which the married couple are concerned and which cannot be ignored without grievous loss. I refer to the whole setting of communal and international life of which they form a part. From the Christian point of view each new home is a new focus of the kingdom of God on earth. It is not simply a new centre of domestic bliss. It is not introvert but extrovert. The married love which springs up and is renewed like a fountain in a happy home is meant, like Jordan, to overflow its banks. It is intended that all the widening circles which the two lives touch together should be enriched by the quality of their contribution. So many people in whose lives there is little love are making a chill or acid contribution to the world around them. God cannot afford to be without the contribution which people who love one another can give to the building of His Kingdom. It is here that so many Christian people make

a mistake in their married life. They think that the wider fields of Christian service should be left to the unmarried—or, dare I say it—even to the unhappy. “We have each other and we have the children”—therein lies our Christian vocation. By degrees domesticity and religion become so identified in their minds that they become indifferent to the cry of a world in pain even though it is heard at their very doors.

But there are no limits to the Christian vocation and, if we attempt to confine it within narrow domestic walls, the salt will lose its savour. Something of the adventurous beauty of first love will take to itself wings and depart. Children will grow up with no thought of social service beyond the home—or no interest in missionary enterprise across the seas. “Ourselves and our children” is not enough; marriage must be interpreted by no less a measure than by its service to the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER XII

MARRIAGE FAILURES

"Neither do I condemn thee: Go, and sin no more."

(*St. John* 8, 11).

Lambeth Conference: Resolution No. 11.

The Conference would call attention to the Church's unceasing responsibility for the spiritual welfare of all her members who have come short of her standard in this as in any other respect, and to the fact that the Church's aim, individually and socially, is reconciliation to God and redemption from sin. It therefore urges all Bishops and clergy to keep this aim before them.

SUCH preparation for marriage as has been indicated in the last chapter will make a great difference in the future to the number of marriage failures. An intelligent view of the limits of sex attraction as a guide to the choice of a life partner, a deepened sense of vocation and a larger view of life will reduce the number of mistakes, but there will still remain the residuum of ill-assorted unions and tragic failures. What can the Church do to help those who are in such sore straits? What is to be its attitude towards irreparable failure, as it may eventually appear to be? It is unfortunate that the Church usually figures in the eyes of these people as the traditional kind of step-mother, harsh, unloving, prepared at any moment to cast them out of the home, whereas it ought to figure as the minister of the Gospel of redeeming love. The position of the Church is not easy. It is pledged to uphold to the utmost our Lord's ideal of marriage as life partnership, and to resist many of the short cuts

which people who have hastily or unsuitably married might take to relieve the situation. It is, therefore, often compelled to give advice which does not give the immediate relief desired. Instead of offering the sentimental sympathy for which the sufferer aches, it has often to appeal to moral courage, and to urge the long view rather than the short view as the basis of conduct. To do this in such a way as to retain the confidence of the sufferer and to secure his moral co-operation is the first part of the Church's difficult problem.

A great deal can be done in the early stages of marriage discord to secure *rapprochement* and a new start. The best thing, of course, is that both partners should come under some new experience of the power of religion to re-make life. In the discussions on the subject of marriage difficulties it is amazing how completely the power of Christ to make people master of any situation in which they are compelled to live is so often neglected. The morality of the Gospel would be quite an impossible task divorced from its spiritual power. People proceed to make rearrangements and to work for a very shabby kind of second best when spiritual resources which might transform the situation are at their disposal. No one on behalf of the Church ought to be allowed to handle the disagreements of married people or to deal with any kind of breach between them in its earlier stages—who does not believe quite fervently in the power of conversion and the immediate influence of Christ upon the lives of the people of to-day. It may seem a little strange to lay such stress upon the attitude which should obviously be taken in the first instance by a Church founded on the Gospel, but experience shows that even clergy can forget in a crisis to avail themselves of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and Christian people will betake themselves to doctors or psycho-analysts, magistrates or matrimonial courts without betaking themselves first to Christ. The result is that,

unless they are fortunate enough to find Christ in the people whom they consult, they will be offered advice on a sub-Christian level. The subsequent conduct of their affairs, the methods adopted and the solution aimed at may quite possibly be only a second-best.

I do not wish to suggest that the Christian person who is to handle the troubles of married people should be a person living in the clouds with no practical experience of life. He ought to be a man of affairs as well as a man of prayer, capable of making definite suggestions which will relieve the strain, and bold enough to suggest, in extreme cases, a voluntary living apart for a time with a view to finding a new perspective and a new sense of proportion. Cases differ so much owing to heredity and temperament, and the psychological atmosphere of each situation needs such individual study, that goodwill and spiritual earnestness alone would never fit a man or a woman for such a delicate task as restoring the harmonies of married life.

The important thing is to realise that misfits, by skilful spiritual handling, may be made to fit, and incompatibility may dissolve gradually under the influence of a new spiritual perspective, aided by the application of good humour and good sense. Marriage is not static, and the partners in it tend to move towards one another or away. There is no reason why a centrifugal movement should not be converted into a centripetal one, and a "drift away" converted into a "drift towards." The will to make the marriage a success must be kept alive at all costs.

There are marriages, however, which do not, alas, respond to such treatment, and which must be ranked as definitely and permanently coming short. The blank in life which arises is sometimes compensated for by what the children give, but more often it has to be met, with cheerfulness and patience, by an honest attempt to carry out the marriage vow "for better for worse," and by a sensible development

of other interests which may make for the happiness of the home.

No one can tell the number of these marriages which approach the border line of failure, for it is a good tradition that people should not lightly show their wounds to the world. There must be many of them, and those concerned in them react according to character. If this has not been shaped in obedience to Christian ideals, the blank may be supplied by a round of rather petty amusements or dissipations. If, on the other hand, the teaching of the Cross finds a place in their scheme of life, the blank may be supplied by a wider sense of vocation, and a deeper response to human need. It is the business of the Church so to strengthen character that it may stand the strain, and even make some spiritual profit out of the hard circumstances it is called upon to face. A marriage which has gone wrong is rather like an illness or an accident or any other misfortune of life. We may come out of them better or worse. All the talk about the purifying effects of pain and suffering is moonshine if character is left out of account. One man comes out of his suffering bitter, hard, cynical; another comes out of it twice as fine a man as when he went in. It depends upon the way he faces it, upon the power to assimilate pain and transmute it into the stuff out of which character is made. The Church cannot make things easy, but it may help to make the man or the woman strong.

There are other marriages more tragic still, with which we must now concern ourselves. They may be called desecrated marriages, as distinct from unhappy ones. They are the marriages into which come such evils as cruelty, desertion, unfaithfulness or venereal disease. While none of them are, from the Christian point of view, utterly beyond redemption, they are the kind of marriages which, in the interests of all concerned, might have to be brought to an end on the ground that the marriage and all that it stands for has been desecrated by deliberate and wilful sin. It is

impossible, to take an extreme instance, to imagine the continuance of a marriage in which the husband forces the wife to act as a prostitute to support him. That terrible form of cruelty is not unknown. More common are the marriages which are infected with venereal disease, and still more numerous are the cases where, with complete callousness, the marriage has been brought to an end through desertion.

What is to be done where repentance can achieve nothing, and where the basis on which the mutual vows were given has been irreparably destroyed? Some will say that all that can be offered is a judicial separation, and that the unfortunate victim must remain yoked to the partner who has desecrated or repudiated the marriage. It might be well if those who think judicial separation is an adequate remedy were to read the findings of the Royal Commission on Divorce, and were to see what experienced people think of this proceeding: "Neither dissolving the marriage nor reconciling the partners nor yet changing their natures." There is a wealth of testimony collected in the Report which might well shake their optimism.

Lord Stroude speaks of "casting them out in the undefined and dangerous characters of a wife without a husband and a husband without a wife": Judge Swift of "placing them in a position where there is an irresistible temptation to the commission of adultery, unless they possess more rigidity and more virtue than usually falls to the share of human beings": Mr. Macquean of "a sort of insult, rather than satisfaction, to any man of ordinary feelings and understanding." Even if we allow for more strength of character in human nature than is here conceded, and admit that some will be too thankful for their escape from the horror of their surroundings to think of it as an "insult," the case against judicial separation as a pure negation remains unanswerable.

I have no doubt that there is—in extreme cases—a necessity for divorce, and I have no feeling of disloyalty to the

teaching of Jesus in thinking so. That He taught the permanence of marriage there can be no doubt, but that He taught the indissolubility of marriage in such cases as I have indicated seems to be contrary to all that we know of His handling of individuals. The discussion as to whether His words are more correctly reported in St. Matthew or St. Mark seem to me largely beside the point. As is well known, the absolute principle of permanence is laid down in the version according to St. Mark. The principle with one exception (in the case of adultery) is stated in St. Matthew. If no exception were stated anywhere, I would still hold that, however strongly the ideal were stated, it could not be intended to be interpreted as a cast-iron rule. This view is clearly stated in a recent pronouncement by the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich:

“Our Lord’s teaching was always, as it seems to me, of the nature of giving principles and leaving His disciples to apply them to the very varied conditions of life. So in respect of marriage, His purpose was to give the fundamental spiritual truth, the effect of which would be to build up a higher conception of the marriage relation and to encourage the ideal. With such a purpose and facing such conditions the recorded words have a different bearing. They are no more intended to be used as laws in a detailed sense to be applied in a literal way to the faulty conditions of human life than are other parts of His teaching, for example, that on giving or on lending or on the disposition of property in general. They are intended to be principles on which Christian conduct is to be based, and in the application of which consideration must be given to the conditions we find about us.”

It will be noticed that I have alluded to wilful and cruel desertion, in addition to marital unfaithfulness as desecrating marriage and creating a possible ground of

divorce. This is allowed in the law of Scotland, and I do not know of any opposition to it on the part of the Scottish Church. It was proposed as a ground of divorce both by the Royal Commission and in Lord Buckmaster's Bill of 1920, and in a much modified form it might even claim to have had the support of the present Archbishop of Canterbury. Speaking in the House of Lords in opposition to the general proposals of the Bill, he added: "I do not feel there ought to be any difficulty about accepting the provision enabling a spouse who has been deserted and who has failed to hear of husband or wife for seven years applying to the court for an order of presumption of death."

These cases of desecrated marriage seem to stand in quite a different category to that of insanity, where no wilful fault can be alleged and no repudiation of vows is intended. I do not know that I could argue with any feeling of finality, for, though no repudiation of vows has taken place, the vows have in this case become impossible of fulfilment. All that I would assert, in spite of the grave risks which attend any weakening of the marriage bond, is that reverence for our Lord's teaching and obedience to Him as the arbiter of ultimate standards does not mean the same as a rigid application of His principles to each individual case.

It is probable that the Church will always take a stricter view of the sacrament of the marriage bond than the nation of which it forms a part, but I should be sorry if complete rigidity were associated with the Church, and any form of relief, which might seem to be essential, with the State. In that case the State would be interpreting something of the spirit of Christ which had been unable to express itself in the Church's institutional system. Undoubtedly it is attractive at first sight—as a way out of the difficulties of the situation—to say that the Church will adhere literally and in all cases to the more rigid form of our Lord's words and that all who find it impossible to fit their married lives into them must seek relief from the State instead. This,

however, is practically to throw many Christian people out of the Church and to break finally their Church connection. It is to assert that no Christian person, so far as the Church is concerned, can expect particular guidance or relief in the application of Christ's principles to a marriage that has ended in tragedy. It is not only non-Christian people who are compelled to seek divorce, but Christian people who want the Church to recognise their necessity. They do not wish to be turned over to the State. If—against their will—they find that it is only the State that will recognise the facts of the situation and help them to remake their lives, their reactions against the Church are likely to be bitter.

There is grave danger, too, that if the Church washes its hands of all responsibility for applying principles in relation to the needs of the situation, the greater will be the rebound from Christian principles when the State finally makes up its mind to give relief. Despairing of co-operation with the Church, the State may allow itself to be pushed further in the direction of licence than would ever have been possible if the Church had been seeking to meet legitimate needs. Both for her own sake and for the sake of the State, the Church cannot remain blind to the situation or deaf to the appeals which are made to it.

When we come to consider the Resolutions of the Lambeth Conference on the subject, there is little indication that the realities of the modern situation or the desperate needs of many Church people are being adequately faced. The most hopeful sign (as I have already pointed out) is that one paragraph, in the resolution dealing with Divorce, which calls attention to "the Church's unceasing responsibility for the spiritual welfare of all her members who have come short of her standard," but there is no suggestion as to how we are to give practical help to those who have come short, or who have suffered because the other partner has done so. The standard of "a life-long and indissoluble" union is reaffirmed. It is recommended that the innocent

party who remarries after securing a divorce should not be remarried in church. If he desires to receive the Holy Communion he is referred to the Bishop for permission. The statements are very brief but very clear.

It is impossible to overcome a feeling of disappointment at these brief references to one of the gravest problems in our modern life. They leave so much unsaid, and what is said might be said otherwise. Take, for example, the phrase "the indissolubility of marriage." It cannot be proved that Christ taught it, though He gave us the most exalted and the most spiritual view of marriage that the world knows. In spite of its belief in indissolubility, the Roman Church "annuls" marriage on many grounds, and it is difficult for the ordinary person to distinguish some of its annulments from the ordinary process of dissolution by divorce. The Church of England allows the remarriage of the innocent party, which in itself contradicts the idea of indissolubility. It is difficult to see how the phrase can be used with strict propriety. More reasonable at first sight is the recommendation that the innocent person should not be remarried according to the rites of the Church. The form of the vows taken—"till death us do part"—makes the service as it stands incongruous. But if the Church means to keep the innocent person within its membership, and to admit him to Holy Communion, is it not fairer to meet him honestly at the start and, if necessary, adapt the wording at the second marriage? The Church ought not to be deterred, because collusion exists, from meeting the genuinely innocent person with sympathy from the beginning. Alluding to this danger of collusion, the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury writes in the pronouncement to which I have alluded:

"Nevertheless, I think the innocent party is always entitled to be married in church. To refuse may be to act with great harshness to one whose bitter experience deserves nothing but sympathy and help."

The Lambeth recommendation, if put into operation, would leave no option in the matter. The Church would always be in the position of refusing at the start to sanction or bless conduct which later—by admission to the Holy Communion—it would be expected to condone.

It is possible that the recommendation that the innocent person who seeks Holy Communion shall be referred to the Bishop is intended more charitably than it reads. It looks at first like an arrangement for quarantine. On the other hand, the reference of the case to the Bishop may be intended to protect the person from the excessive zeal of some excommunicating parson, and it is in that way people of goodwill construe it. The question of how far the discretion of the Church can be exercised, without grave injustice, through admitting or refusing to admit certain classes of people to the Holy Communion is too big a question to discuss here. Why, for instance, should divorced people alone be penalised when notorious, evil landlords, profiteers, company promoters and others of anti-social life and character remain unchallenged?

How far the Holy Communion lends itself to disciplinary purposes other than the individual conscience may impose is a difficult matter to define. We are very far from having discovered how to make discipline intelligent or effective in this modern age, and our experiments in connection with the Holy Communion have not been very successful.

What of the guilty party in the divorce? The Report only gives guidance by implication. The ministry of reconciliation and redemption is invoked and there the matter ends. But in reality it is only the beginning. Let us suppose that the man who has cruelly deserted his wife or the wife who has gone off with another man comes under the influence of the ministry of reconciliation and redemption. What then? It is a most serious matter for those who believe in the efficacy of the Gospel. In many cases no experienced pastor could possibly recommend an attempt to undo the

past. The man or the woman, however repentant, must remake their lives under the new conditions, not the old. Even though, technically, they may be "living in sin," they may be really reconciled to God and enjoying fellowship with Him. Are they never to have fellowship with the Church, though they have fellowship with God? Though they have found God through Christ, are they never to find him in the Sacraments? These are really test cases for the Church, for—if its institutional life is so rigid that it cannot apply the spirit of the Gospel through its rites and ceremonies—it becomes a hindrance rather than a blessing. I prefer to think that, in reminding us that the Church's aim is reconciliation to God and redemption from sin, the Bishops mean to suggest that those who have been reconciled to God through the Gospel may be admitted in due time to the Sacrament of their redemption.

No one writing on this subject of the Church's attitude to divorce can omit to say something of the Church's attitude towards the Divorce Laws of this country and the process by which divorce is obtained. It was naturally impossible for the Lambeth Conference to concern itself directly with purely English affairs. It ought, however, in fairness, to be understood that the Church does not officially oppose equality in matters of divorce for men and women. Some of the most unpleasant and hypocritical procedure in the divorce courts ^{was} ~~is~~ bound up with the fact that while a man ^{was} ~~is~~ able to secure divorce from his wife on the ground of adultery, a woman ^{could not} ~~cannot~~ secure it without proving cruelty as well. In order to prove cruelty where adultery ^{had} ~~has~~ already been established, a legal farce ^{has} ~~has~~ to be resorted to. Lord Buckmaster, in his speech, moving the second reading of the Matrimonial Causes Bill of 1920 (which would have swept away this inequality), said:

"Your Lordships are well aware of the elaborate judicial farce which is enacted day after day in our Law Courts

by which women get round that provision. All they have to do is to get a decree for the restitution of conjugal rights which is meaningless and purposeless except to enable them to say when it has been disobeyed after fourteen days that there has been technical desertion or a technical act of cruelty and that, coupled with the adultery, enables them to get free."

The present Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking in reply on behalf of the Church, expressed his willingness to co-operate in removing this anomaly and so terminating this tortuous procedure, *which has since been effected.*

There are, however, other customs and practices which have grown up largely through the failure to secure a reasonable measure of reform—so shameful to any civilised State, that it is difficult to think of almost any reform at all likely to be passed that would not be preferable. The custom of securing a woman with whom to provide the necessary hotel evidence of unfaithfulness has created a new and degrading trade. The practices connected with collusion are as damaging to character as any sexual vice. We have paid a heavy price in deterioration of character for the victories that have been secured in the defeat of successive reform bills dealing with divorce.

The Church is called to face a difficult task in the future which will need both courage and discernment. To oppose licence on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to apply great principles with due consideration of human limitations will demand something of the firmness and the sympathy of Christ Himself. There is still the party within the Church which looks back to the year 1857 when the first Act permitting divorce was passed—the party which says in the words of the late Lord Phillimore: "If I could, I would go back to the state of things which existed before." But to go back to that age when married tragedies had no relief or no end is impossible. There is, on the other hand, a

party without the Church which would carelessly pluck up the roots of the family and sentimentalise out of existence the solemn obligations of the marriage tie. With such forces the Church can make no co-operating alliance. What is needed is to present to the nation a faithful interpretation of the Christian standard of marriage, with due relief for such marriages as have been desecrated beyond repair. With continuous witness to the higher spiritual values of marriage, I am confident that such a standard may still be retained in the customs and legislation of the country. If —after witness given and efforts made—the Christian standard is rejected, then Church and State, independently, must formulate their separate standards. May that day be far distant.

CHAPTER XIII

HOME REUNION

" I love not to be herein more wise, or harder than our own Church is, which hath never publicly condemned and pronounced the ordinations of the other Reformed Churches to be void."

Bishop Cosin.

" I do profess that with like affection I should receive the Blessed Sacrament at the hands of the Dutch Ministers, if I were in Holland, as I should at the hands of the French Ministers if I were at Charenton."

Archbishop Usher.

" O how little would it have cost your Churchmen in 1660 and 1661 to have prevented the calamitous and dangerous divisions of this land and the common dangers thereby, and the hurt that many thousand souls have received by it. And how little would it cost them yet to prevent a continuant of it!"

R. Baxter, in 1691.

It is evident from a study of the Report of the Lambeth Conference that Reunion with the non-episcopal Churches has occupied a comparatively minor place in the proceedings. The important deputation from the Orthodox Eastern Church, including the Patriarch of Alexandria, has kindled afresh the hope of reunion with that great branch of the Christian Church, and the policy of the Conference would seem to have been much affected by the hopes that have been raised. It is an ungenerous task to criticise any movement which aims at realising a large measure of unity for the Church of Christ, but there are certain considerations which create perplexity and anxiety in many minds.

In the first place the statement of Anglican doctrine given to the Orthodox delegation as a basis of reunion has a particular emphasis which may easily lead to misunderstandings in the future. The doctrine of the grace of Orders is defined as a special charisma given to the person ordained, and ordination is described as in some sense "a mystery." Modern views of "grace"—which imply personal relationships rather than gifts bestowed—will not fit very easily into the Eastern Orthodox way of thinking, and the phrases used on both sides are not of much creative value for the future.

Or, again, the declaration that the Thirty-Nine Articles must be interpreted in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer may either mean something that everyone will accept or on the other hand it may mean something that everyone will oppose. If, for example, the Articles on the Church, the General Councils and the Sacraments were to be tacitly ignored or allowed only a minor place in the formulation of Church of England doctrine, grave dissensions might arise. It would, perhaps, be a more satisfactory statement to all concerned if no claim were made that the Articles are to be interpreted by the Prayer Book or the Prayer Book by the Articles, but that *both* must be considered in any final synthesis. This is particularly important in view of the statement made by the Conference that in the Holy Communion service "after communion the consecrated elements remaining are regarded sacramentally as the Body and Blood of Christ." This is a statement which, as it stands, large numbers of loyal Churchmen would not accept.

But the question which really matters in negotiations with these ancient Churches may be stated thus—are they prepared to be baptised into the modern spirit? Are they prepared to keep step with the Anglican Church which welcomes the onward march of science—which has discarded all ideas of Church infallibility, whether of Pope

or Councils, and which is not afraid of creating new precedents to meet the needs of a new age? The aims and hopes of these Churches for the *future* is what we really want to know. "The maintenance of the Apostolic Succession" may occupy too large a place in the discussions and larger and weightier matters may consequently be ignored. Are these Churches likely to be a drag on future developments? Will they join with us in our declarations on peace and war, on the rights of human personality and on the relationship of Christianity to industry and commerce? Will they allow the prophetic and the priestly ministry of women? Will they grant synodical rights to the laity? If closer contact with us is likely to open their eyes to the value of these things and will not at the same moment check the spirit of progress in our own ranks, then reunion with them is all to the good.

We cannot rest satisfied, however, with acceptance of each other's orders, or with adjustments of doctrinal statement to meet fixed standards of the past. These things might all be arranged by allowing much to drop out of sight which it might not be convenient for others to see. Yet the result would not be satisfactory, unless the uniting Churches were agreed about the future as well as about the past. To prove that we come from the same stock and have certain features in common is no guarantee that we are moving along the same lines or obedient to the same spirit. The assurances which might convince us that we could go forward together joyfully and confidently into the future with these Eastern Churches were not forthcoming at Lambeth.

It is Reunion with the Free Churches of the English speaking world which is most urgently needed if Anglo-Saxon Christianity is to fulfil its mission to the people amongst whom it works. Judged from the standpoint of natural affinity and practical usefulness, there can be no doubt that this is the phase of Reunion which it is incumbent

upon us to realise without delay. The religious life of Anglican and Free Churchmen touch at every point, but unfortunately without coalescing. Both, it may be claimed, have been baptised into the modern spirit; both are deeply concerned with all questions of ethics and morals affecting the society in which they live. There is no doubt that they can go forward into the future together with a common approach to the subjects of peace and war, the rights of human personality, and industrial and international relationships. They have been gradually approaching nearer one another for some time and have come to appreciate the contributions which each might make to a United Church. The appreciation of the English liturgy which is so common amongst Free Churchmen, and the adoption by Anglicans of so much of the experimental freedom of Free Churchmen is a small indication of this growing *rapprochement*. The conciliatory attitude which has long marked the discussion of subjects, once hotly disputed, is more significant. The gradual breaking down of barriers which have prevented worship and preaching in each other's churches has been hailed with popular approval. The negotiations between leaders on both sides in England, which took place between the years 1921 and 1925, were followed with the keenest interest, and high hopes were entertained that the pronouncement given to the world that "Free Church ministries are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Catholic Church" was the prelude to constructive action.

It is deeply to be regretted, as I have already said, that Lambeth has not carried further the work of these conferences. It dismisses the subject all too briefly with the recommendation that they should be resumed. It remains, however, for those whose hearts are set upon Reunion in this country to take up the matter where the Bishops have left it, and try to create the right psychological atmosphere for the resumption of further conferences.

In the first place, we must resist the feeling of disappointment in so far as it might in any way lead us to relax our efforts. It is easy to read into the refusal of the Bishops to reply more definitely to the request for elucidation of the present situation more than is intended. No one imagines that the Episcopate is a homogeneous body in which all think alike. It is only when the psychological moment has been reached that difficulties can be sufficiently overcome to secure a pronouncement which may bear on it the stamp of unity. We must endeavour to create such a situation that the coming of the psychological moment will be inevitable. The fact that reunion between Anglican and Free Churchmen will be proceeding apace in South India during the next few years—if courage and patience prevail—ought to help us in our preparatory work in England.

I am not greatly discouraged that the new Church in India will not technically be in full communion with the Anglican Church. Facts will eventually prove too strong for the kind of logic which would keep us apart, and the spirit of unity will overflow any barriers which may be drafted on paper. My fear is lest here in England we should lose faith in God and in ourselves, and come to believe that the difficulties are insurmountable. To do so would, I feel sure, be a sin against the people of this country, who have a right, in these days of spiritual enlightenment, to see such a united witness for Christ in their midst. I am not troubled about the fact that Rome would still stand outside such a united witness. The spirit of willingness to give it has not yet fallen upon the Church of Rome, nor is there any opportunity or glorious possibility for our generation being thrown away as regards her. Whatever may come—it is not yet. No sin is upon our conscience. We are not guilty of a great refusal. But, in the case of the Free Churches, we have “got so close” that to draw back now would be to disappoint reasonable spiritual

expectations and to inflict a blow upon the prospect of religion in this country.

There are certain things which those of us in the Church of England, to whom God has given "a concern" in this matter, must press for without cessation. Our numbers are sufficiently large—far larger than is to be judged by official representation—to secure a hearing. We must ask that such doctrines as unite us with the Protestant side of Christendom should be given their full weight and importance in any pronouncements on the doctrinal position of the Church of England. We are not content that the case should go by default. Church of England doctrine can, as we know, be stated either with a Catholic or a Protestant emphasis. The tendency to omit much of what was stamped upon our Church by the Reformation—and of what has subsequently been learnt through historical investigation and renewed study of the Bible—must courteously be resisted. The policy (which seems to be contemplated) of allowing any theory of the Episcopate to be held academically, but only one theory, and that the most rigid, to be applied in *practice* must, if necessary, be opposed. We owe it to ourselves, to our own reading of our Church's historical position on this subject, and to our faith in the new Catholicity in which we believe, to bear an honest and faithful witness in this matter.

But much rather would we persuade than oppose. Our main task must be to keep the need of Home Reunion so prominently before our fellow churchmen and the nation at large that the growing force of public opinion may bring about constructive action. Each opportunity that comes must be seized to bring this nearer. The adoption of a common policy in Education and Church Extension, as well as in Crusades—the recognition of our common Churchmanship in every kind of public and civic service—will hasten the demand for the realisation of closer unity. We

cannot slacken in these united efforts which have already begun.

We must also ask for a generous interpretation of whatever rules on Intercommunion are laid down as the result of the Lambeth pronouncement. Whatever may be the strength of the arguments for postponing full intercommunion until structural unity has been achieved, many of us feel that we would be false to everything that we have learnt in Christ to abstain from communion with our Free Church brethren when we meet together in a common atmosphere of worship and conference. There are occasions when the soul is so sure of itself that no decision of authority would alter its sense of the inherent rightness of its action. Such is the feeling which I personally experience when on occasion I meet together with Free Church brethren at the Lord's Table. It is inconceivable that such spontaneous actions (when they arise), already sanctioned by so many Bishops of the Church, should be in any sense forbidden or condemned. Even if to some of our brethren we may seem to have leaped over a wall instead of waiting for the discreet opening of a gate, it is only to proclaim to others how good is the land in which we have arrived. Like the spies who entered Canaan ahead of their brethren we have found grapes of Eshcol in the Promised Land.

Is it, on the other hand, too much to ask that Free Churchmen will on their part pursue undauntedly the policy which during recent years has brought us close to them? There is a tendency in certain quarters to raise the old cry "What portion have we in the son of Jesse? To your tents, O Israel. Now see to thine house, O David." It is tempting, as in the case of Hagar and Ishmael in another chapter, to work out a Biblical parallel. How tempting are these parallels and how dangerous to those who are too fascinated by them. At any rate the history of the divided monarchy does not encourage Free Churchmen to respond to such a cry, even if the Anglican

Rehoboam has foolishly followed the advice of the "young men" of Lambeth. It is not good for either Judah or Israel to go their separate ways. Each of them may in turn be carried captive by the power of Babylon. It is far better that if "rough" words have been spoken they should not be allowed to rankle. Are not Free Churchmen bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh? Better that Judah and Israel should come together again than that any sense of grievance should threaten the spiritual welfare of the nation.

It is that spiritual welfare of the nation which is an infinitely bigger thing than the safeguarding of any theory of episcopacy or the vindication of any denominational right. It is easy to become so absorbed in adjusting the various traditions of Church order which have come down from the past, that the minor importance of the most important point concerned in relation to real life is completely lost sight of! It is easy, too, to cherish an aloofness or independence which has no longer any relationship to the actualities of life. The corrective for either kind of ecclesiastical absorption is to be confronted anew with reality, to get a new vision of human need, to see the multitudes scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd, to become filled with the crusading spirit of redemption. No one who is really concerned with the general alienation of the masses from organised Church life can allow himself to become too intransigent in matters of unity. The need of an effective witness "that the world may believe" is too overwhelming to allow his evangelistic zeal to acquiesce in division.

There is great need that on both sides we should approach the problem of Unity with more elasticity than in the past. Organic unity has in the minds of many so closely knit and highly centralised a conception that to attain it may well seem undesirable. The freedom of "self-governing Guilds" within the larger compass of any United Church that may be created is a balancing idea which needs

to be assimilated with that of organic unity. The suggestions which have recently been put forward by Mr. Kenneth Ingram for future policy are worthy of a closer study than they have yet received from the Church as a whole. Writing of the need for re-establishing contact between Church and people, he urges that the Church must be prepared for drastic change and reformation—just as she has needed reformation in the past—and that this reformation may be expected to involve a settlement of Christian dissensions and some scheme of reunion. He then proceeds:

“If this is contemplated, or any less ambitious degree of it is contemplated, we must be prepared to realise that such reunion will inevitably mean the toleration of variety, both of the forms of belief and of worship. It is inconceivable that unity will ever be secured by crushing the existing denominational varieties into one uniform pattern—so long, at least, as human minds and temperaments vary.

“Christian unity, however, would not necessarily be that indefinite undenominational spectre which Catholics suspect, whenever they are presented with a scheme which invites the intercommunion of sects. It requires no great imagination to conceive a scheme of reunion which would involve no serious compromise of existing principles. Such a Christian Church would require a common basis of belief, but, beyond that, each denomination could remain free to fulfil its own method of government, to follow its own form of worship, and even to differ in its interpretative creed. The denominations could, indeed, remain distinct as self-governing guilds within the embracing Christian Church.”¹

I feel certain that if the Conference could be resumed between Anglican and Free Churchmen with a revised

¹ Kenneth Ingram, *Has the Church Failed?* Chap. vii.

view of the meaning of organic union and what it implies, great progress could be made. It may easily become a fetish if the settlement of the question of orders is always to be kept in the foreground.

I remember how often during the prolonged debates on the Prayer Book we were recommended to begin with the less controversial matters, in order that the right atmosphere of trust and confidence might be created when we reached the subjects which were more likely to divide us. Such a policy might well be adopted at the resumption of the Conferences. Much water has flowed under the bridge since 1925. New ideas of the meaning of unity have come to light. The old antithesis between organic unity and federation has lost much of its sharpness. It might be said that Anglicanism itself has entered upon a new phase by helping to create a new Church in South India with which it must have close and federating links. Bishops themselves are contemplating an œcumenical Council which will be larger and more representative than Lambeth. The future is full of possibilities and every year, even through failures and mistakes, a deeper understanding is secured of the human needs which the principle of unity is intended to meet and of the elasticity with which the principle may be applied.

Probably we have been too much interested in thinking of Reunion as if it were some means of repairing a broken machine. We have concerned ourselves with trying to fit the pieces together and restoring them according to the pattern which we thought they represented. We have carried out our work in terms of the past when we ought to have been thinking of using the present material to shape something new in the future. Dean Inge reminds us in his book on *Christian Ethics*, that the history of Christianity like that of Buddhism, has been very largely a history of decline and perversion. If that is so, too much looking back is bad for us all. The driving power which

will enable us to overcome our difficulties is not concern for the past but faith in the future. It is the possibility of co-operating with the creative spirit of God which makes the fashioning—not the refashioning—but the fashioning anew of the Church of Christ so inspiring and hopeful a task. Whenever it is presented in this light new interest is stirred in the great mass of people who have begun to despair of institutional religion. These people recognise—for our country is still a religious one and modern thought is not hostile to religion—that a Church is needed. But its present chaotic condition repels, and those who are in charge of it do not seem to them to put first things first. The importance that is attached to Episcopacy, Apostolic Succession, and the necessity of receiving Holy Communion only from an episcopally ordained ministry seems to be out of all proportion to the facts of the spiritual life and the common experience of Christian people. The denominational grooves in which some one particular custom or dogma of the Catholic Church has been set up as upon a throne seem to the outsider to commit numbers of Christian people to a particular form of idolatry. These emphases and divisions, this sect-manufacturing and test-mongering seem to be wholly unworthy of two thousand years of Christian experience.

It would be greatly to our advantage if the more public discussion of Unity for a year or two could be concentrated on one aspect alone—Unity in relation to the world's needs. It may be necessary *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Here in England the discussion would naturally take the form of Unity for the sake of effective witness for Christ to the English people. Let the voice of the people who desire a Church that may reflect the unity that is in Christ Jesus be heard for a time. Let the future constitution, federal or organic, be studied with no predilections for any particular form of the past, but solely in relation to the question of the wisest and best developments for bringing the

population of this country into living and permanent touch with the Gospel of Christ. I believe that, as a result of this continuous study of human need and practical necessity, technical discussions could be resumed in an entirely new atmosphere. There would no longer be the same desire to discuss maximums or minimums of concessions on either side. The very word concession might disappear, replaced by the idea of contributions of love and wisdom for the sake of the souls for whom Christ died. And even if the element of sacrifice were to enter in on both sides—in God's name why not? If it was once "expedient that one Man should die for the people," why should not a Church die for the people too? Through death it might at last enter into the power of Christ's resurrection.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH

“ The Church has been trying to referee the game of civilisation as the world now plays it rather than to revolutionise the game itself. . . . We have lost sight of the venturesomeness of faith.”

Contemporary Review (1917).

“ How much truth will a man’s soul bear, how much truth will it dare? ”

Nietzsche.

THE IDEA of the Church as a great Corporation of Witness has received fresh treatment from the Lambeth Conference. Fellowship, we are told, was the idea which ran through all their work ten years ago and bound it together in a true unity. Witness is the dominant thought in the present Report. The connection between the two is inevitable, for witness defines the purpose of fellowship and fellowship provides the basis for effective witness. The more closely we associate the two, the more eager we become for unity, and the more resolved to use it effectively. Witness then follows naturally the subject of Home Reunion.

In one sense the witness of the Church is always and unchangeably the same—to bring the Eternal Background into men’s lives as it is set forth in Christ’s Gospel of Redeeming Love. Again and again, when well meant efforts are made to reduce the Church to a mere humanising and socialising institution, the answer has to be firmly made that the Church is far more than this. Is it not the business of the Church to seek the interests of the people? —is the question often put to us by the leaders of the

Democratic Movement. Our answer is that we seek what we believe to be the best interests of the people, and that involves something larger than the aim of the Democratic Movement. I hope to show later how deeply the Church should sympathise with many of the aspirations of the people, and how earnestly it should work for their realisation, but the "other worldliness" of the Church is an essential part of its witness to the world. Its business is to bring heaven down upon earth, not to make earth an imaginary heaven. Its method of reconciliation is to reconcile all men to God, and thus effect their reconciliation with one another. The "interests" of the people include for the Church not only their material welfare and the enlargement of their social life, but their moral and spiritual interests in relation to this Eternal Background. The Democratic Movement—sometimes with, sometimes without the aid of the Church—has done much to serve the interests of humanity. It is difficult not to think of it as owing its moral strength to the genius of Christianity. But neither Humanism nor Democracy are identical with Christianity. God revealed in Christ, as a dynamic force in human life, carries us far beyond the aim and scope of any of our modern movements. Christ is more than a social teacher or revolutionary leader—or joint founder with others of a progressive Humanism.

It is right, however, that the sincerity of the Church to its own teaching should be tested by these and kindred movements in the sphere where they have much in common. The value of the Church's witness to that other world, which is slowly apprehended by faith, and taken possession of by a growing spiritual experience, will be negligible in the eyes of the people if its witness to what matters now is at the same time withheld. There would be but tepid interest in any new fusion of Church life unless it meant a corresponding witness of greater moral earnestness in matters of social and international righteousness. The old

pragmatic test will be employed—"By their fruits ye shall know them,"—and by the result we shall be judged.

The people of Scotland will look to see whether the Union of the Established and the United Free Churches will produce a greater liveliness in religion than was evident before. They will ask whether this amalgamation has a national significance or is merely of the nature of a domestic labour-saving and money-saving character. What effect will it have upon the slums of Glasgow? What new enterprises will be undertaken? What spiritual reverberations will be felt throughout the country? Or, again, what is to be the outcome of Methodist Union in terms of more effective witness for Christ? At what point does it pass beyond an application of the science of domestic economy to Methodist affairs and become the jumping-off place for a new manifestation of the Evangelistic genius of the Methodist Church?

It is well, sometimes, to pause, and ask what are we working for in this matter of reunion? There must surely be some more practical reason than sheer idealism and some more idealistic reason than prudence and economy. There are all kinds of ways in which unity might be restored, and in the end we should be worse off than at present. We might be absorbed or exterminated, or we might all find ourselves quite conveniently placed in a fine brand-new institution from which the Gospel had been first carefully excluded. There are all sorts of possibilities, and the more diligent people become in tinkering with the present defects of our institutional system the more important it is to know what we are really after. Is it "to restore the integrity of a seamless robe" or to achieve a useful piece of internal rationalisation, or is it something far bigger than either?

We must decide upon our objective in order that we may weigh well the policies that are offered to us and the results which are likely to follow. To work for unity in

pursuit of a vague idealism or for the sake of the improved mechanism which it may bring with it is to leave out the greatest factor of all—the influence of which should be felt at every stage of the process. The only satisfying objective, which will secure that unity is carried out in the right way and in a creative spirit, is to set before the mind the future work and witness of the United Church. To secure through unity a more faithful witness to the truth as it is in Jesus, a more efficient instrument for advancing the Kingdom of God on earth and a more powerful preaching of the Gospel is the sort of aim which can alone keep the movement for unity on a strictly moral level.

Herein lies a much-needed safeguard against trying to achieve unity for unity's sake, or for less respectable reasons which are apt to play some part in the process. The Unity Movement, like the Peace Movement, gradually creates round it an organisation like the League of Nations, and political and other considerations come in at times to give it a particular bias. Churches may desire to seek the protection of other Churches for political reasons, or a covert form of imperialism may intrude itself. Considerations may arise of a secondary kind which unduly retard or accelerate the process as it affects one Church or another. It is the principle of relating all policy to the question of what the Church is to witness for in the future which provides moral security for those who are engaged in these delicate negotiations. To secure an acknowledgment that Orders are valid or that a summary of a Church's teaching is Catholic doctrine in the eyes of another Church does not carry us very far on the road to united effective witness in relation to the needs of the modern world. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"—is a question which has more relation to the future than to the past. Churches may never be able to agree about one another's pasts, and yet, by nature and temperament, by a common outlook on what religion means and the world needs, they may be

admirably suited to walk together in the future. Churches on the other hand, may reach agreement about the past, but until both have been baptised into the same modern outlook they would, I fear, make bad travelling companions.

It is the capacity, then, for a common witness which is the touchstone of desirable union and, from this point of view, Home Reunion in England becomes more than ever an ideal to be actively pursued. We share with the Nonconformists in the social life of the people; we are continually moulding our thought on the study of the same literature and are acquiring many of the marks of a common mind. We have passed through the same adjustment to the authority of Scripture and to the results of historical criticism. We have accepted in common the scientific view of the universe. There is nothing to distinguish in the world of art or science or business a Churchman from a Nonconformist. Differences of culture are dissolving; differences of morality do not exist. The old dividing lines are gone, and whatever cleavages there are on liberal thought or social policy run horizontally through the Churches, and not perpendicularly between them as of old. For many the barriers are already down which hindered joint action in the past. Like-mindedness rather than denominational membership draw people together for religious enterprises. Interdenominationalism has become the only possible policy, in cities, for effective witness. If the question be put: Are we sufficiently agreed to give an effective witness to the nation in our own day and generation?—there are few who, putting the past out of account, would not unhesitatingly answer—"We are well able to give such witness and to go forward into the future together."

The witness, which this United Church may be expected to give to the English people, will be of the same character as the witness which each of the several parts, already moving towards a common end, have already given in the

past. There will be no dramatic change though the quality will be improved and the power intensified. It will still be of that "Catholic and Protestant" character which is demanded in the best interests of the national life. There will be witness *for* the good and *against* the evil, witness on behalf of the rights of human personality, the essential fellowship of all mankind, and the supreme authority of Truth and Righteousness and Love—witness against the avarice, selfishness, cruelty, lust or extravagance which threaten, in one form or another, the moral welfare of the people.

It is a mistake to think that this witness can be specified with the distinctness of a political programme. Take, for example, the question of housing and of slum clearance. This, in our own day, has acquired such a social importance that the Church might well be excused if its social conscience were preoccupied with nothing else, but even now the housing shortage has grown less and the first battles for slum clearance have been won. Or, again, take the problem of unemployment which threatens to break each successive Government, and staggers the courage of every minister of the Crown who tries to solve it. There was a time when the Church had a witness to bear in this matter regarding the gravity of the situation and the inadequacy of soup kitchens to meet the need. But there is no further need for local protest or calls for national awakening. Whatever service the Church can now render lies in helping to create the international mind on the development of which depends the solution not only of this but of so many problems. The situation is always changing. At present the process of rationalisation in business is proceeding apace, with scant consideration for the workers thrown out of employment. It is to the importance of securing due consideration for the human "factor" viewed in vivid colours of human personality that the Church's conscience on Unemployment needs now to be directed.

What matters in this "Catholic" witness is that it should be early and not late. It is not very creditable if the Church comes at the tail end of the procession of witness, moving a little breathlessly in its efforts to catch up. Even when one part of the Church—or one particular group within the Church—has led the way (as has often happened), the rest of the Church has been so far behind that the witness lost its representative character. At present the dividing lines between the Churches act as excellent lightning conductors to secure that any light and heat that has been generated in one may not be too easily transmitted to the other. Perhaps in the United Church less moral enthusiasm will be discharged harmlessly into mother earth!

The nation is looking to the Church at the moment, if not for a lead, at least for a witness in the matter of education. There is no hostility to the Church Schools. On the contrary, it may be argued that support is growing for the retention of the dual system, at least in some or other modified form. Modern feeling is against uniformity either in systems of religion or of education, and if the children of the well-to-do have variety of choice, it will not be difficult to convince democracy that the children of the poor may have the same advantages. But it is to the tone and temper of the Church that the nation looks in examining the Church's claims or responding to its appeals for financial help. With the State the interests of the child are paramount, and it knows that Christianity agrees with it. The Church—if it should stress too much its own rights, careless of the convenience of the children or the working out of any system which may secure the largest possible good for the largest possible number—would stand convicted of selfishness of aim. It would fail to give such witness to the paramount importance of the child as might be expected of it in virtue of the Christianity which it professes.

The opportunity and the call to witness are always changing, though witness itself must be unceasing. The complexities of the business world are a constant challenge to the Church to witness to the simple principle of honesty. The callousness of the competitive system has to be met by constant witness to the moral value of co-operation. The protective economic measures, which each nation feels itself compelled to adopt in self-defence, have to be set in sharp contrast with the measures which any real belief in international fellowship would dictate to all the nations in their dealings with one another. Problems of Empire call for constant reiteration of Christian ethics in dealing with primitive peoples, as well as constant witness to the principles of national and racial self-expression where more cultured people are concerned. The vista of witness gets ever wider as the Church grows in spiritual sensitiveness.

More difficult and less inspiring at first sight is what I have called the "Protestant" witness of the Church. There is a certain adventurousness in leading the way to a more rational view of commerce and a more brotherly way of thinking about men and nations. Even if the columns of a reactionary Press may pour scorn upon the first efforts to secure some change in a social custom or some new application of the principle of justice or brotherhood, yet there is always sufficient "fluid" Christianity in the nation to give the pioneer encouragement. His speech or action are not without some murmurs of applause.

This, however, is not the case with such Protestant witness as I have in mind—the protest against the evils of the drink traffic—the ravages of gambling—the corruption which is frequently to be found with sport. These are not popular subjects, nor are they the ground for witness which any but the more convinced and determined Christians make haste to take. Thousands of Christian people are shareholders in "the trade," and not entirely

comfortable when certain facts about it are brought to their notice. Gambling is a popular form of amusement, and few people want to hear what devastating effects the habit has upon public morals and the homes of the people. Sport is a kind of idol of the British people. We do not burn sacrifices to it (unless indeed we pass our children through the fire of it), but we devote columns of our morning and evening Press to it, and surround it with many of the attributes of secular worship. It is, indeed, a fascinating object in a mechanised world. But any criticism of the concomitants which surround it is resented. Is it not a thing apart? Is not the same resentment sometimes displayed, when protest is made against the excessive speed of motorists and a plea put forward for the hunted pedestrian? Should there not be a moral code for motorists—the value set on each individual life—which is the code of Christ Himself?

And yet this Protestant witness is equally important with the Catholic. Christianity must contribute the pungency of salt to the national life, and it is absurd to think that all the tendencies of modern civilisation are healthy and invigorating. Gross forms of parasitism have fastened upon sport; the temptations to drink are multiplied a thousand-fold in the interests of inordinate profit. Gambling is not always a harmless flutter, but a habit which cuts at the roots of character and destroys the foundation of home and national life. It is impossible to ignore these social evils and to avoid giving what must be at times an unpopular witness. It is greatly to the credit of the Free Churches that they have so often faced the obloquy of attacking these anti-social tendencies while the Church of England was giving a more hesitating witness. It needs a tough skin to disregard the constant cries of "spoil-sport," "kill-joy," "wet blanket," "pussyfoot," when dealing with these social problems. We should fare badly in giving our Christian witness without the moral strength of Puritanism.

I am inclined, however, to think that this distinction between "Catholic" and "Protestant" witness in the social life of the people is apt to be misleading and possibly even mischievous. It is too much like a distinction between what is positive and negative. The idea that Protestantism is negative has long since been exploded, and faith in the positive character of Catholicism has been rudely shaken. It is better to think of these two kinds of testimony as essential elements in the one witness, and the more closely they are joined together the more effective they become. There has been too little co-operation in the past between Christians of these two types of mind, and much of the witness of the Church has been spoiled by the isolation in which it has been carried on.

It is only in recent years that the close relation of the Temperance problem to housing and slum clearance and the raising of cultural standards has been clearly understood. Formerly it was made part of a system of Christian asceticism with a much more limited appeal. To-day the Catholic and Protestant elements of the argument are fully blended, and the stress is laid upon the distinction between what is social and what is anti-social. To spend, as we do in Birmingham, in two weeks a sum of £300,000 on drink is socially indefensible. It is equivalent to the cost of the voluntary hospitals in the city for an entire year. To watch, for example, the anti-social effects of alcohol in any hard-drinking, slum-covered district of our great cities is heart-breaking to anyone of "social" sensitiveness. Moral consciousness sinks to a low ebb. The people no longer trouble about low wages, bad housing and the misery of their environment. They sit down in their squalor and forget the inalienable right of the downtrodden to make a nuisance of themselves until their miserable conditions are relieved. Not from these districts are drawn the robust reformers of our social life, the architects of to-morrow, the builders of the new age of international industry and

peace. Sodden with drink, these people pass away like flotsam on the stream of national life. It is because of these things that the witness of the Church against that which is anti-social can never cease. Momentary popularity or unpopularity is of no consequence. The work of social redemption must go on.

It would, indeed, be a sinister sign if the Church in its witness never faced unpopularity. There is nothing more desirable at times than unpopularity of the right kind. The New Testament is full of exhortations to face such situations cheerfully. "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake" has its modern parallel. We may often be brought before shareholders' meetings or Trade Union Councils for Christ's sake. The Beatitude is still to be won in a modern world where toleration is supposed to be triumphant. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." "Rejoice and be exceeding glad," mark the words "exceeding glad," "for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

There is one great advantage which a Uniting Church would possess in its witness and to which I would draw attention as I close this chapter. I have said that its witness would be very much of the same kind as previously given by the separate Churches, but in one respect, at any rate, it would be very different. It could speak on all questions of Unity with quite different authority. At present, in its divided condition, as it looks out upon a world full of class consciousness and racial antagonisms, its witness is maimed from the start. Where disputes arise how can it say "Sirs, ye are brethren" knowing its own failure to achieve internal unity? How can it express Christ's Gospel of brotherhood in a way to conquer the dividing lines of race if it cannot itself conquer the far less acute dividing lines of creed and orders? Politeness may spare us the

opening words of the quotation "Thou hypocrite," but the rest of it will certainly be applied as soon as we venture into the open. "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

If only these considerations—of a human and social kind—could weigh with our leaders in the immediate future, we could hope to be delivered from this state of dividedness which is in a real sense "the body of this death" as regards any triumphant witness for Christ. When all hopes in the social and international world are set upon the possibilities of a growing synthesis, it is a denial of faith for Churchmen and Free Churchmen to fail in finding a synthesis for their politics and beliefs. Capital and Labour in this country are drawing steadily together through all the pain and grief of the past, and new co-operative policies are emerging. Monsieur Briand is bringing the whole question of dividing tariffs into a new alignment with his gospel of the United States of Europe. Our own Government is struggling persistently to make new arrangements for autonomous freedom within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Within the religious world the same movement has been gathering force for years. A tide of the spirit has been flowing of which others have taken advantage. Their needs were no greater than ours; their spiritual leadership not more distinguished. They have achieved a common witness and have embarked upon the great adventure of delivering it to the world. Are we in this country, Anglicans and Free Churchmen, to stand "pat" and refuse the voyage of discovery to which the spirit calls us?

CHAPTER XV

TWO TESTS OF WITNESS

PEACE

Peace does not mean the end of all our striving,
Joy does not mean the drying of our tears:
Peace is the power that comes to souls arriving
Up to the light where God Himself appears.

Studdert Kennedy.

LEISURE

"The ethic of work is, equally, the ethic of play; the same law of excellence being prescribed for both, so that the best work and the best play, tend to become indistinguishable. . . . Courageous, intelligent and beautiful play; courageous, intelligent and beautiful work; either of these phrases may be taken as defining the criterion standard or governing ideal of our ethics."

L. P. Jacks.

THERE are two subjects on which the witness of the Church in the social life of people is given under a constant fire of criticism—one is the Witness to Peace, the other to the Right Use of Leisure. This chapter must be regarded as an addendum to the preceding one.

THE WITNESS TO PEACE

A number of the keenest Christians in all the Churches now take what is called the full pacifist position, and are impatient with their brethren who hesitate over some of its implications. From outside the Church, especially from some members of the Labour Movement, comes an insistent demand that the Church should repair its honour,

tarnished in the late war, by cutting itself off from every sign of association with anything military in the national life.

My own sympathy is so strongly on the side of Peace that I am sometimes tempted to accept the pacifist position in spite of certain weaknesses and inconsistencies which I think I see in it, but the point I desire to make in this brief statement is that "pacifist" witness does not always dispose people to peace, and there is room, as I will try to show, for another kind of treatment of the subject which aims at securing the same results.

I can remember, as a boy, when I read the story of how Peter the Hermit preached the first Crusade, and of how the people responded with the cry "Deus Vult," that it never occurred to me that all wars were contrary to the Will of God. Of course, it was wrong for big nations to bully little ones. The Spaniards had no business to send an Armada against England or to invade the Netherlands; but there did not seem to be anything essentially wrong in a good scrap between England and France, who were fairly well matched, and a war for so splendid an object as the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre seemed to carry with it something of a religious sanction.

I do not think that this way of looking at war ought to be entirely dismissed as schoolboy ethics unworthy of the serious attention of those whose business it is to expound to the younger generation a satisfying theory of peace.

It has still a strong hold on many other minds than those of schoolboys—or, to put it in another way, the schoolboy mind retains its hold on a great number of grown-up people. The preaching of a Crusade against the Anti-God religion of the Russian Bolsheviks would be popular with a great many religious people, and would seem to be more sensible and more religious than a Crusade to recover a particular patch of ground from the Saracens. Many good citizens cherish a secret belief that there will be no real peace in

the Mediterranean until Italy and France have had a scrap in the good old way and found out which is to be the master.

A great many of the arguments for peace leave these people—and much wiser and more experienced people—cold; while much of the literature on the subject is too highbrow to be effective. The “all or nothing” policy of certain pacifists, who condemn war root and branch equally as regards the past and for the future, plays havoc with their historical sense. It is not fair to judge the wars of the Old Testament or of the Age of the Vikings by the same standard as the twentieth century. It is asking too much. There must be a difference between war as an institution sanctioned by religion, as it often has been in the past, and war condemned by an awakened Christian conscience as it will be in the future.

While it is admitted that romance has departed from modern war (though the tradition dies hard), the heroism of the common soldier remains as something which always commands respect in a shoddy world. There is a stubborn determination that when “values” are being discussed and virtue crowned, this particular flowering of the human race shall not be forgotten or ignored. Commonsense people will not have it that all war is murder, or every soldier a homicidal criminal, or every Army Chaplain an apostate to his faith.

Nor is the ordinary person always attracted by the way in which Peace is presented to him as the alternative to war. The assumption that peace is desirable as an end in itself seems to underlie much peace propaganda. To many it may seem self-evident. But to others, the word has become so tarnished that much of what is said and written about it misses the mark.

What is Peace? To those who have thought deeply about it, it means the reconciliation of conflicting interests, the creation of an active sense of brotherhood, the manifestation of a harmonious and progressive order of society.

But to the careless thinker, perhaps even to the average person, Peace has no positive meaning. Tennyson did a great disservice to the cause of Peace when he wrote his famous line in *Locksley Hall*—"The peaceful earth shall slumber wrapt in universal law." Peace is often identified with slumber. For many, it is the period of quiescence when no great enterprise is afoot. It suggests, at the most, a kind of dull prosperity, in which every man sits fatuously under his vine or under his fig tree.

To some extent, no doubt, the false reading of history to which we have been accustomed accounts for this. It is the dates of famous battles that have been marked for us in asterisks to remember. It is the careers of conquerors that have defined the watersheds of history. It is the drums and fifes that have made our music, and martial glory that has gilded our romance.

This can be changed and is being changed by the new spirit in education, but the periods of peace in the past still look sufficiently flat, or commercialised, or involuntary, to make the prospect of a lasting peace much less attractive than peace advocates are aware of. The kind of peace with which the past has familiarised us is a serious handicap to our efforts to promote it in the future. There are many kinds which we have no desire to repeat. Who wants the sham peace which Europe "enjoyed" before the recent war, when every country resembled an armed camp? Who wants the tyrannical peace which has usually been imposed by the victors upon the vanquished at the close of a war? Who wants a peace which rests upon expediency or fear or exhaustion, which are the moral and physical foundations on which peace in the past has so often rested?

The task as I see it which lies before those of us who are sworn, for varying reasons, to promote peace is to study the mentality of those whom we desire to convert, and to meet them with respect and sincerity on their own ground. When I think of what I have seen personally in the War

of 1914-1918—(do not call it “The Great War”; that is the old trick of investing war with romance reasserting itself involuntarily)—when I think of the stench and the blood and the mangled bits of beautiful human bodies, of the heart-ache and the agony and the destruction and the waste, it is difficult to keep calm, to argue or to state a case. A blind fury possesses me for the moment. The one thing I want to do is to abolish this accursed thing called War. But a new generation is growing up which will seek its own experiences independently of mine. It will not be shouted at, though it may be reasoned with; and, if I am not mistaken, we shall have to take quite patiently and seriously those who invest war with a romance which they deny to peace, or who visualise the possibility of a war in the light of a Crusade.

There are two considerations which I would urge and which I think may be allowed to carry weight. First of all with regard to religion, whatever view we may take of the past, there is no doubt that the enlightened conscience increasingly condemns war. The area to which religious sanction might apply has shrunk to a negligible figure. It is not possible within the compass of this chapter to discuss why the full implications of a religion so slowly come to light and are so slowly accepted. Sensitive souls see the light. Gradually the dawn comes, heralded often with an apocalypse of martyrdom. Even in the days of the Crusade, when the official sanction of the Church upheld the doctrine of a Holy War, the sensitive soul of Raymond Lull knew better. He preferred to preach the gospel to the Moslems, and died a martyr outside the walls of Bugia in Algeria. Here is the faith in which he lived and died. “I see many knights,” he wrote, “going to the Holy Land beyond the seas and thinking that they can acquire it by force of arms; but in the end all are destroyed before they attain that which they think to have. Whence it seems to me that the conquest of the Holy Land ought not to be attempted

except in the way in which Thou and Thine Apostles acquired it, namely, by love and prayer, and the pouring out of tears and blood."

It is this faith which is now conquering not the world but religion. For the conquest of religion is the first step to the conquest of the world. The power of religion is to be judged by the speed with which it diminishes sanctions for war: Crusades are becoming impossible and inconceivable to the religious mind. In time, the very phrase "a Righteous War" will become irrational. I want the younger generation to reason the matter out for itself. With the new enlightenment, war and religion cannot go together. Which is more worth preserving?

Again, war has passed into the realm of a completely organised science of destruction. Granted that between the ages of savagery and the present age of organised scientific destruction there was an age of chivalry, which tinged warfare with romance and created the figures of Saladin and Cœur de Lion; granted that here and there, in particular episodes, the romantic element may still survive; it is yet quite certain that modern warfare has no room for it. It must go. Depopulation, devastation, starvation, destruction from near and from afar by open and by secret means, by poison and by shells is part of the ordinary, scientific apparatus of all warfare wherever it is skilfully and efficiently organised. Heroic virtues may still survive in the gallant caste that plays the tragedy, but the producers are concerned with scientific realism. To destroy as thoroughly and as quickly as possible is the legitimate end of warfare. It is no more possible for a "romantic" person to keep company with modern warfare than it is for a religious person *not* to keep company with constructive Peace.

It is for the revaluation of Peace as a great constructive ideal that the ability and the enthusiasm of the younger generation is so sorely needed. The criticisms of previous

peace periods in the world's history are well founded. The moral foundations have been insecure. They have survived for a time on a war mentality held temporarily in abeyance. They have been of an interim character, and men's minds have been preoccupied with their coming eclipse. The same feeling exists to-day, and gives an air of unreality to disarmament conferences. Neither the possibility nor the desirability of Peace is firmly grasped; hence the institutional structure intended to secure it is always tottering.

Yet Peace is the only possible practical expression in the international sphere of the gospel of human brotherhood. It is the only possible *milieu* in which religion, art, literature, science and philosophy can continue to serve mankind without becoming sinister and malicious. It opens out the way for the only possible contacts of industry and commerce which can satisfy the moral sense of mankind. It is the inevitable preliminary of any genuine attempt to solve the problem of harvesting and distributing the world's products on a harmonious and economic basis.

I suggest that the Crusading spirit, which is inherent in human nature, and which is always ready to be harnessed to enterprises on the moral level which man at the moment has reached, should now be directed to converting the world to Peace. That means a reconstruction of our habitual ways of thinking as well as of acting. It means an acceptance, for example, of the principles of the Paris Pact (as recommended by the Lambeth Conference), not on the surface of our individual or national life but in the secret springs of thought and feeling out of which, as we know to our cost, are the issues of life. It means that Peace becomes intelligible and attractive to us in terms of friendship and that nationalism becomes refined and disciplined for us in the universalism of the City of God. All the staleness and lifelessness which we have associated with peace in the past as a miserable preservation of the *status quo* disappears

when we approach it in the crusading spirit of friends of the International Christ.

The Peace which the younger generation will give to the world will not be built on the model of the Treaty of Versailles or of any other Treaty which has been made by people unemancipated from belief in war. A peace which has been imposed is no peace. Spiritual conversion must precede constructive effort and growing co-operation can alone secure the final synthesis.

Herein lies the most glorious challenge to the new age, the greatest constructive effort that has ever been presented to the intellectual and organising ability of man. Here is something to be "made" with the sweat of hand and brain, with the energising labour of the Spirit.

"Blessed are they that *make* Peace." It is the younger generation that will supply the artificers.

THE WITNESS TO THE RIGHT USE OF LEISURE

There is an increasing unity of outlook in the Christian Church on the general witness which the Church should give to the value and importance of leisure in the life of the community. It is recognised that we must model our witness on the idea of "fullness of life" as it was taught and lived out by Jesus, and that the indifference of some parts of the New Testament to the needs of the body and to the claims of social life have a very simple explanation. People were expecting a speedy end to the world, and the travelling missionaries—the pioneers of the Cross, who have written most of the New Testament—were too much occupied with their job to give thought to recreations and amusements. There is now little opposition to the theatre or the cinema as such, and the days when *Punch* was excluded from the Y.M.C.A. Reading Room, and even a swimming match regarded as "unchristian" are long since over. While the steadfast purpose remains, and needs

ever to be kept alive—to witness to all things honourable and of good report and to oppose all that is unhealthy and unclean—the Church is neither shy nor awkward in the presence of the modern demand for entertainment of body and mind. It has learnt from Jesus, and it knows now how immensely stronger its position is in preaching the call to sacrifice and service because it preaches in the Name Jesus. As I have said elsewhere:

“It was precisely because Jesus was so whole and sane in His outlook upon life, so frankly social, eating and drinking and enjoying it in people’s houses, that His teaching about the Cross is so arresting and convincing. Take away the conviction that Jesus values at its true worth what we rather disparagingly call the lighter side of social life, and what guarantee would there be that He was really a safe guide to conduct? It is because He never ignored or depreciated any of the human faculties, because we are really sure that He could appreciate the difference between dullness and pleasure and infinitely preferred the latter, that we are prepared to follow Him at any time on a path along which no amusement may lie. When He tells us to hold all things loosely for the sake of the Kingdom of God, we know that He is not asking us to let go things that, though dear to us, meant nothing to Him. He is as sensitive to the world’s pleasure as He is conscious of the world’s sin.”

There are certain tendencies, however, in the modern use of leisure which the Church, in company with educationists and artists, must deplore. There is, for example, the gradual decay of the power to amuse oneself or to find amusement in creative work. The people are catered for in the mass, and mass production rules their leisure hours. One of our leading musicians in Birmingham tells me that the study of music amongst certain classes of people is largely dying out,

and teachers constantly complain that the hobbies taught in school are not pursued when the pupils leave. The bad housing conditions in which many live may account partly for the failure to carry on what has been taught in school, but the wireless and the cinema have certainly had a very distinct effect upon the choice of how leisure is to be spent. It would be absurd not to recognise what a boon both these modern developments of civilisation have been to the people. It would be easy to point out, especially in the case of wireless, what a valuable influence has thus found its way into the national life, but the repercussions have tended to lessen still more the initiative in cultivating pursuits and hobbies of one's own invention. The Church, in its constant witness to the value of personality, joins in the general word of caution which lovers of art and creative work of all kinds would venture to utter on the danger of receiving too much and creating too little. It would be regrettable if, in a world already standardised industrially, the hours of escape from business should become standardised also.

The cost of amusement is another matter on which the Church has some witness to give. Great numbers of people are spending far more than they can afford on one form of amusement or another. The Church, while it must continue its efforts to secure a higher standard of living for the poorer members of the community, cannot possibly neglect to try and save the nation from its present epidemic of extravagance. Sometimes it would almost seem as if the poorer we get the more we feel entitled to spend. There is a certain recklessness noticeable which may possibly be accounted for by the prevailing pessimism about the revival of trade. It is rather like a return of the war psychology which prompted men to say "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." There was more excuse, however, in those days for such a materialistic philosophy than now. Unjustifiable extravagance is the only verdict which can be passed upon the amount spent on pleasure by great

numbers of people of all classes. The hire-purchase system, so much in vogue, has tempted people to keep motor cars they cannot possibly afford, and to embark on other luxuries that are beyond their means. The number of cars on the road that have been actually paid for grows rapidly less year by year and a corresponding increase of financial embarrassment is usually the result. There is too much truth in the assertion that people prefer running a car to bringing up a child to indulge in any cheap cynicism on the matter. In the face of extravagance, which does constantly cut even at the roots on which our home life is founded, the Church has a witness to give on the stewardship of money and on the proportion which may rightly be devoted to pleasure. The way in which the health of the woman, often reduced to the position of home drudge, is sacrificed for the sake of a car is quite immoral. The neglect of children's education, the failure to pay the "dues" of Church membership, the starving of the missionary enterprise of the Church—all these are often due not to lack of means but to extravagance, thoughtless or deliberate. We shall not make much progress with any witness for Christ that is worth while until we challenge sharply in the Name of the Lord the scale of our own expenditure.

The most difficult "witness," however, which the Church has to give on the question of the people's leisure, is usually connected with the question of Sunday Observance. Sabbatarianism is dead as far as personal liberty is concerned and it is generally admitted that Sunday is given not only for worship but for the re-creation of body, mind and spirit. The question of the provision which shall be made in a community for those who desire to be entertained on Sunday is one which is constantly agitating the larger centres of population in this country. Excursions into the country have so reasonable a moral defence on the ground of health and the change from ordinary surroundings which the

workers need, that the work so regrettably involved may be accepted as socially necessary.

But the opening of cinemas on Sunday is generally regarded as coming under a different category. Expeditions into the country in search of fresh air cannot be made by the industrial community except on Sunday, whereas the cinemas are at their disposal every night of the week. The labour, therefore, which is involved, and the further extension of trading on Sunday, become important factors in deciding upon the social utility of the proposal. Do the conditions of modern life demand that such provision should be made in the interests of those young people whose homes are uncomfortable and who have nowhere to spend their Sunday leisure, even at the cost of the labour involved, and of further inroads upon the ideal of an "uncommercialised" Sunday? The general feeling of the Church is that it would be far better, if possible, to meet the needs of these young people by throwing open every kind of hall and public building available, especially in the winter months, where young people can meet one another as they desire, and that such service as is involved should be given on a voluntary basis in recognition of a great social need. The Church is not prepared to endorse the handing over of the situation to the Cinema Trade on a commercial basis. Here there seems to be a principle at stake which is worth witnessing to in the public interest. It is significant that a new country like Canada, which cannot be accused of inheriting any narrow Sabbatarian tradition, has set itself determinedly against the exploitation of Sunday for private profit. Canada prohibits all forms of sport and entertainment on Sunday where a fee is charged either directly or indirectly. Without a fee any form of public entertainment is permissible.

It is a reasonable line for the Church to take that these entertainments, if on one ground or another they are found to be necessary, should be placed on the same voluntary basis as the Church itself. Meantime, no pains should be

spared in trying to create the public spirit which will seek to minister to the needs of these people who want somewhere to meet one another on Sunday evening. The Church itself could never deal with more than a small fringe of the situation. It has other Sunday evening obligations to fulfil, including the provision of popular evangelistic services, lectures and socials after its own ordinary evening service, and with the best will in the world it could not hope to make adequate provision. Its cordial co-operation, however, with all who seek to solve the Sunday problem of Leisure on Christian principles is assured.

PART III

THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND SACRAMENT

CHAPTER XVI

POPULAR PREACHING

“ It is good to be a Herschel, who describes the sun, but it is better to be a Prometheus, who brings the sun’s fire to the earth.”

Phillips Brooks.

A CONSIDERABLE part of the witness of the Church is delivered through the preaching of clergy and ministers. It is much to be regretted that we are not all more alive to the possibilities that preaching presents. A real revival of faith in ourselves as ambassadors of Christ would do much to draw the Church together in this country. The increasing recognition that we share together in the greatest ministry of all—the ministry of reconciliation—would tend to unify our thinking on matters that divide us at present. A passion for the Gospel leaves little room as a rule for obsession with denominational differences, and the discovery that God is prepared to use us all equally in the work of conversion is a great deterrent to any kind of church egotism.

I do not mind confessing to the fact that I love preaching and believe in it. That does not mean that my faith is unswerving or my love always constant. There are dry periods when the sap does not rise, and rough passages where the chariot wheels drag heavily. But on the whole I know that I should not be content with the priestly office if I could not also share in the prophetic ministry. Even if I dare not claim such an experience as lies behind the great words of St. Paul, “Necessity is laid upon me. Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.” I am still conscious that it is worth while.

But numbers of people who are engaged in preaching, and who might be said to earn their bread and butter by it, have no such conviction, and the results are rather disastrous. The work is done with no kind of spirit. They are afraid to give themselves away. They compromise with a harmless discourse delivered with a noncommittal air. Like the curate who read the Prayer for Parliament in a low voice, because he was not quite sure Parliament was sitting, thinking that was the safest compromise with the Almighty—these people preach with a note of apology, as much as to say: "I am not quite sure whether this is not a bit of foolishness after all."

The reasons are not far to seek, but unless they are dealt with, and if possible disposed of, these people whom I have in mind will never find "release" in preaching. There is, first of all, a vague idea that the importance of preaching has declined with the multiplication of books and newspapers, and that the spoken word has lost its effectiveness.

May I point out that no politician would fail to stump his constituency no matter how many pamphlets had been issued from his committee room? He knows the value of personality in relation to the spoken word. May I add that few business firms rely on their circulars solely to secure business? They put their travellers on the road, and do the bulk of their business by talking.

Further, I should be sorry to put my trust in journalists for the propagation of the Gospel, for the conditions under which they carry on their important profession are so governed by popular taste, that serious advocacy of the claims of Christ as distinguished from debates about religion is almost precluded. It may not be true, as one well-known preacher asserts, that "the average journalist who deals with religion is often about twenty-five years behind the times," but even the most thoughtful journalist will, I think, agree with me that the conditions of his craft impose upon him restraints and inhibitions from which the pulpit is or ought to be free.

The Saturday religious articles in *The Times*, contributed by a correspondent, are a case in point. Quite admirable as they are, in style and matter, provoking thought and stressing truth, standing probably in a class by themselves, still it is not possible for them to make the moral appeal which is the privilege and the glory of the preacher.

There is another idea not so vague, and to be taken much more seriously, that the good priest need not trouble himself much about preaching, nor need the congregation, which has a good priest to look after it and the regular benefit of the Sacraments, ask for much in the way of preaching. The Priestly Office and the Grace of Sacraments is all sufficient. Mr. Underhill in his book *Feed My Sheep*, deploras this tendency:

“It is difficult to account for the perversity which almost until to-day has led to contempt for preaching of some Anglo-Catholics—clergy and laity. Even now, though things are gradually improving, this folly is not quite dead. You still hear men speaking of a sermon as though it were quite an inferior department of the life and work of the Church.”

The last thing I think which we would desire is to set up a conflict or arrange a divorce between the priestly (or as I would call it for the sake of theological clearness, the pastoral) office and the prophetic ministry. We have surely reached a stage in institutional development when we can contemplate the fusion of both in one person, or, if we are still to think of them as in some way separate, then we can assert the necessity of both. I know the psychologist with his incurable passion for arranging us all under types and headings would always keep the priest and prophet separate in his thought. He would shake his head sadly over my unorthodox assertion that I had affinities with both.

"In all human affairs," writes Dr. Crichton Miller, "the distinction corresponding to the prophet type and the priest type tends to manifest itself; progressives or reactionaries, Liberals or Conservatives, in business and politics, in education and religion, they are ever with us. And this must necessarily be so.

"The creative impulse and forward outlook of the one type must conflict with the groove tendency and retrospective attitude of the other."

Still, in ordinary life I would venture to reply it is not quite so. I remember as a curate I once had a rector who was devoted to the Conservative party, but he supported a famous Licensing Bill, which was carried by the Liberals through the House of Commons only to perish in the House of Lords. I remember a prominent member of my congregation in a certain parish who sternly resisted the introduction of a Cross into the church, and protested (God bless him) against stained glass windows as keeping God's sunshine out, but the width and sympathy of his intellectual and social views were in complete contrast with the conservatism of his ritual.

The recent cleavage on the Prayer Book ran through all political parties alike. It produced the strangest bed-fellows. I doubt if any classification of the psychologist would really account for their concubinage. Personality is not a state. It runs away while the observer is getting his microscope ready. Individuality, by its very nature, baffles analysis. Extroverts and introverts, prophets and priests are quite recognisable as general types, but it would be mischievous to suggest there could be no overlapping. A man may easily be a bit of both, and the size of either bit may expand or shrink under a change of spiritual atmosphere or climate. If we could only escape from the tyranny of labels that clever people put upon us we might really develop remarkable all round ability!

Even the extreme Anglo-Catholic may reasonably recognise in preaching an alternative method to the Mass for lifting up Christ before the people. The Roman Church does not allow itself to be confused by any imaginary gulf between the prophetic and the priestly office, and identifies the two much more rigidly than we do in the Church of England. Whatever our Sacramental views, to whatever obedience we belong, we are equally members of that Church whose members in early days went everywhere preaching the Word.

Our ministry in the Church of England is a ministry of the Word and Sacraments. We do not magnify the one by discrediting the other. It may be there is a closer mystical relation between the effects of each of them than we have supposed. There is a delightful spiritual daring—the kind of daring which helps to bridge doctrinal gulfs in a phrase of Robert Micklem, the Congregationalist minister: “The sermon is with us neither a moral diatribe, nor an exhibition of the preacher’s views upon religion, but a setting forth of Christ—crucified and risen; it is in very truth an elevation of the Host.”

We can trace in the hesitating attitude towards preaching, so often found in the Church of England, the influence of modern psychology. We owe much to this new science, but I think we sometimes forget how tentative and experimental it still is. We are apt at times to be cowed by it, when there is no need, whereas rooted in our own Christian experience we should be busy assimilating and discriminating. At other times in our haste we misread the conclusions altogether, and getting hold of something out of its context, go about with a bee in our bonnet ever after.

The stress which analytical psychology lays on the necessity of individual dealing for the curing of the troubles of the soul is no new thing to Christianity. I have heard our Lord described with admiration as the Prince of Analysts, though I confess the phrase, with its technical implications,

seemed to me a poor substitute for the Gospel phrase "The Confidant of Publicans and Sinners."

But if He was the Prince of Analysts, He was also the Prince of Preachers, and His skill in the practice of one office did not impair His joyous exercise of the other. It is reasonable to suppose that they dovetailed into one another, and, if only the beginnings and endings of the personal incidents in the Gospel story could be recovered by us, we should see how close was the relation between His preaching and His pastoral work. However that may be Christ Himself preached, and sent His disciples throughout the towns and villages preaching. Healing of heart and soul followed in the wake of the preaching.

How many, I wonder, found co-ordination of aims, reintegration of self, unification of the personality (or whatever modern phrase we may use for finding peace and power) when our Lord made the great appeal, which must, I think, have been a peroration with shining eyes and arms uplifted. "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and ye shall find rest unto your soul." He did not hesitate to make suggestion or to employ persuasion or impress His personality upon His hearers. Truth, embodied in His own personality, was His justification. Respect for every other human personality was His safeguard. Moral passion was the compelling force. And if it be urged that the parallel between ourselves and our Master is too imperfect to carry weight, I would reply that, unless there is something of Him in us, we cannot preach at all.

We cannot parallel, I know, the lucidity or the love or the moral passion which burned in Him, but it is the truth which we have learnt from Him, the experience of God which we enjoy in Him, the power and the influence of His Personality—His, not our own, which we are trying to express and to make effective in the lives of others.

We are not afraid of hetero-suggestion when it comes from Christ. It may be that, when rightly made, it becomes

auto-suggestion in the mind of him that receives it. The distinction is often in practice a fine one. But so long as we hold that the initiative for our salvation lies with God through Christ impact from a Personality other than our own is of the essence of our faith.

Between a psychology based upon Determinism and Religion, as we understand it, there can be no makeshift agreement. It is a case of no quarter given or received. The preacher that muddles himself up with inhibitions and restraints that are really based (though he may not be aware of it), on a philosophy incompatible with his religion is well on the way to creeping paralysis. Quite fearlessly we must let ourselves go in our approach to other personalities, believing we have something to give which they desperately need, and which they might well ask for with greedy outstretched hands as soon as they understand its meaning and its lifegiving power.

There is one more inhibition which I would deal with before I go on to speak of the preacher's main objective. I have spoken of the danger of despising preaching as a kind of inconsiderable and inconvenient addendum to the priestly office. Some people regard the preacher with the same kind of tolerance as the people in Eli's day regarded the priest. "This fellow," they say, "has been put in the preacher's office that he may eat a piece of bread."

But there is also the reverse attitude which regards the Preacher as a "superior" person in the Confucian sense, produced apparently by the concatenation of exceptional gifts, fortunate circumstances and extensive (or expensive) training! There are some who shrink back because a standard is set up that not one man in ten thousand could hope to attain. They decide that they have not got it in them, and they do not try. Books on preaching are often discouraging in this respect because they fail to indicate that a quite ordinary person may, by the grace of God, become good in his own class. They do not even hint that, like everything

else that is not purely mechanical, the principle of classification holds good. Readers are left with the impression that it is a kind of open race, in which men like Wesley and Whitfield, Newman and Liddon, Phillips Brooks and Robertson, of Brighton, get placed and the rest—they also ran. This would be very depressing if it were true.

I cannot help thinking that something like this must have been in the mind of that learned man Dr. Mahaffy, once Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, who wrote a remarkable book in the year 1882 on *The Decay of Modern Preaching*. It is evident that he was unfortunate enough to come in for the backwash of the great Evangelical revival, when the preachers that he listened to were losing touch with reality through their failure to assimilate new knowledge and reinterpret their faith accordingly. The criticisms which he makes, and the remedies which he suggests point to the emergence of a superior being of that kind who has, however, happily never materialised.

He complains that no large body, such as the clergy of a particular country, can consist of superior men, and must, when exceeding certain numerical limits, conform in ability and earnestness to the ordinary level or average of human nature. Now the average of human nature, he continues, has neither the intellectual power, nor the moral earnestness necessary for the profession of preaching. He therefore pleads for brains, and concentrates his hopes upon a segregated few. "This must be insisted upon," he says, "that want of brains is a capital defect, and that no amount of moral excellence will make a stupid man a successful preacher. . . . It is not necessary that he should possess personal piety," meaning by that, as he explains later, "that closer walk with God which is the privilege of the very few." But brains he must have, and as much segregation as possible, that the effect of his excellent discourses may not be impaired by any publicity given to flaws in his behaviour.

The celibate life is recommended in a passage full of shrewd observation, and not lacking in touches of unconscious humour.

“From the point of view of preaching there can be little doubt that married life creates great difficulties and hindrances. The distractions caused by sickness and other human misfortunes increase necessarily in proportion to the number of the household; and the time which might be spent in meditation on his discourse is stolen from him by other duties and cares. The Catholic priest, when his daily round of outdoor duties is over, comes home to a quiet study, where there is nothing to disturb his thoughts. The family man is met at his door by troops of children welcoming his return, and claiming his interest in all their little affairs. Or else the disagreements of the household demand him as an umpire, and his mind is disturbed by no mere speculative contemplation of the faults and follies of mankind, but by their actual invasion of his home. Hence it is that the weekly sermon is so often scamped, or copied hurriedly from some diverse thinker, so that it fits him badly and sounds hollow and foreign in his mouth. All these things seen by his neighbours and discussed in the parish must necessarily take from the weight of his exhortations in the pulpit. It is absurd that hindrances, which he is often really unable to overcome, should be charged to him as personal shortcomings. But it is not the less true, that in this case familiarity breeds contempt, and the preacher must be a very rare personage, and blessed with a very rare wife and children, if they prove no hindrance to the power of his sermons.”

Perhaps I have not been quite fair to this remarkable book, which is both suggestive and penetrating in places. It is quite true there is a certain kind of stupidity which

disables a man from any kind of preaching, and an intellectual background is an integral part of effective preaching to any ordinary congregation. Yet I find myself violently in revolt against the presuppositions which I find running through the argument. It leaves no room for the magnificent "foolishness of preaching." It resolves itself into the discharge of an intellectual obligation. The warmth, the passion, the extravagance, the homeliness of genuine preaching is left out. It becomes "splendidly regular, icily null."

It is not segregation in a celibate home and a theological library which produces, at any rate, the preaching which stirs the blood and steadies the will. That kind comes from experience of the rough and tumble of life from which the discipline of the home is not excluded. Here I find I am in danger of committing myself to some kind of theory of preaching. I should like to avoid doing so. The field is so wide, personality so diverse, and results so difficult to analyse that any theory of successful preaching can be made short work of.

The wind bloweth where it listeth. A man may have more head than heart, and be a good preacher. A man may have more heart than head and be a good preacher. If he is all head and no heart, or all heart and no head he may still do something in a small way. If he has no head and no heart the case is quite hopeless! He had better apply to the Inland Revenue Office. Such people are in demand as Collectors of Income Tax.

My great desire is to popularise preaching with those who in the good providence of God are called to it. I hate to see a man engaged in a job into which he cannot put his heart. Many of the inhibitions which prevent him doing so are imaginary and delusive. To begin with—he need not be a superior person. No loyalty to his priestly office need deter him. It is not an unlawful liaison he is contemplating. He can fall in love with preaching without

shame. No development of modern science—psychology or any other—forbids him letting himself go. There are no taboos in front of him, nothing but an open door. But if he is to enter in and be happy he must have an objective which grips him and holds him fast. There, I think, we reach the kernel of the matter. There is truth in the old saying that a preacher is a man whose business it is to secure a verdict for Jesus Christ. Certainly, he is more of the advocate than the judge, and the sermon which imitates the impartial summing up from the bench is too restrained to be successful. The preacher must have a cause to plead, a hero to rave about, an experience which he wants to share—something in himself that he must pass on, and about which he simply refuses to be silent. The idea of an advocate does not in itself carry us far enough. The preacher exists not only to witness but to achieve. The more clearly defined his objective the greater his power. “I don’t know what he was after,” is a very common form of criticism to be set side by side with an equally unpleasant one: “I do know what he was after, but it doesn’t seem worth while.”

Achievement and worthy achievement must be his object. Men lose their grip on life when they begin to doubt whether they are achieving anything worth while. I once heard of a Diocesan Bishop who, in a fit of depression, put his head down in his hands on the table in front of him and cried, because he thought at the moment a Diocesan Bishop could not do anything really worth doing. It is not an experience about which youth knows very much, but middle-aged people are quite familiar with it. While it lasts—until it is escaped from as a mood, overcome as a temptation or disposed of as a hindrance by some readjustment—the man continues to lose his grip on life. Some preachers never get their grip; they miss the joyous intoxication of youth, and cultivate from the first the most dismal and depressing symptoms of middle age ~~from the first~~. They are old before

they are young, retired before they are enlisted, disqualified before they have got under weigh.

The objective is the main consideration of a single sermon, or a series of sermons, or of the whole exercise of what is called the preacher's art. The finding of it brings not only release from inhibition, but the freedom of the spirit. "Something to preach about," is not enough. "Something that I want to achieve by my preaching," is the only thing that satisfies the creative instinct by which (like other men) the preacher lives. "A sermon," says Mr. Gossip in his lectures on preaching, "is a road which ought not to die out but to lead to something which those travelling it reach." The note of achievement is what all who have written much or thought much about preaching seek to press home on the preaching profession. "Do not be a theological barrel organ," says Spurgeon. "Remember," he adds, "the word sermon is said to signify 'a thrust' . . . the great truths of revelation are as sharp swords." The fear of saying nothing, and saying it very well, is very evident in his lectures to his students. He is not content with the man who can divide his sermon well when he has nothing to divide. "A mere division makes it like an excellent carver with an empty dish before him." "Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing more than any man in all Venice." Sermons that get nowhere are to him "like bits of bladder which would lie on your finger nail, blown out until they remind you of those coloured balloons which itinerant dealers carry about the streets to sell at a half-penny a piece for the delectation of the extremely juvenile!"

The note of achievement—how shall we define it? It is nothing else than to make the Gospel effective in human life. I prefer that way of putting it, though it ought to be sufficient to say that the preacher's motive is to preach the Gospel. Unfortunately, that phrase does not now convey the passion for souls, the passion for social righteousness, the passion for achievement which marked the early preaching

of the Word. It is necessary to emphasise that the preacher's business is to make the Word effective. No one, I hope, will suppose that I am here ignoring the work of the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit be not in the preacher, then is his preaching vain. I only want to destroy the idea that the preacher, having delivered his message, then the Spirit arrives on the scene to make his message effective. That is a dualism which is destructive to the preacher's morals. He begins to think that it is merely his business to speak, not to make his speaking effective. That is, in short, the higher responsibility of the Spirit. In consequence he ceases to be dynamic, and ends in losing his grip.

I urge effectiveness must be his aim from start to finish. He must regard himself as an instrument of the Spirit of God for making the Gospel effective in human life. This is the cure for inhibitions and the brooding sense of futility. He is to be a man of action—changing the mind and moving the will of his hearers, and producing, as the result, a real impact on the world in which he lives. He is not only to make Christ known but to make Him king, not only to make people sensitive to God but obedient to Him. Rightly understood, his business is most satisfactorily summed up in the one word Conversion—whole-hearted and complete conversion to God's way of life revealed in Jesus.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COMMON HERD

"Jesus bids us not to cast pearls before swine, but He does not bid us to feed even swine on pebbles."

Phillips Brooks.

"So often we are only trying to be mutually harmless. We are like steamers crying in the fog and whistling that we may not run into others nor they into us."

Phillips Brooks.

"The style is the man."

Buffon.

I MEAN nothing disrespectful by the phrase "the Common Herd." I only mean to imply that I am about to write about the needs of ordinary congregations—the common or garden needs of the genus called man. I know it will be said that there is no such thing as an ordinary congregation just as there is no such thing as an average human being. That is true in several senses. When, for example, the preacher speaks of "my congregation," he differentiates it from all other congregations and visualises it as quite unique. Its peculiar character is a subject on which he often speaks with fervour. No congregation is strictly homogeneous and from that point of view, too, the phrase "the common herd" may be open to criticism, but I think it may pass as embodying a broad distinction between ordinary and select congregations. I have not in my mind such a congregation as Dr. Page Roberts gathered round him at St. Peter's, Ven Street, nor am I setting out to help the Master of the Temple. I leave out the British Association, the Public Schools, and other formidable institutions

of that kind. I am concerned with the needs of the common folk, to whom the ordinary parochial parson ministers in his preaching.

It is important, I think, to make this limited objective clear, for I find that many excellent books on preaching deal with generalities all the time. A great deal of good advice to preachers is wasted because it is not related to particular needs, and sweeping assertions are made which the facts do not warrant. It is foolish to discuss the value of written sermons as distinct from extempore except in relation to the experience of the preacher, the subject of the sermon and the congregation to be addressed; generalisation is impossible. It is equally silly to lay down rules about the length of a sermon, when, amongst other varying factors, the capacity for making it interesting differs so enormously, not to say disastrously. The Irish peasant on the roadside showed sound common sense when the English tourist stopped and asked him how long he would take to walk to Ballyglass. The Irishman made no reply till the tourist started again. Then he told him. When the tourist asked with some heat why he had not told him that before, he replied: "How could I tell till I saw what pace you were walking at?" How could anyone tell how long someone else ought to preach until he saw him at it. Generalisation is impossible.

There are a good many things which are often authoritatively said—apparently as if they were of universal application—which seem to me to break down in relation to the common herd. I am jealous, as I have said, of the rights of the common herd and of the freedom of the common parson. The worst kind of beating is the browbeating we often get from very clever people who are a little intolerant of the common people. The generalisations which we have to fight against are those based upon the idea that the crowd can be catered for like the select few and that there is a common standard of culture for all preachers

of the Gospel. I have only to state the "idea" in this way for everyone to repudiate it, but the attitude of mind which it represents is not so easily got rid of. Just as the convention of the Sunday suit powerfully affects English churchgoing Christianity, so the conventions of propriety powerfully affect our pulpits. We think and preach in stiff collars. We are afraid of our native homespun wits. Take, for example, the two warnings which are so often given to young preachers: Beware of sentiment and beware of rhetoric. If it were explained, at the same time that the warning is given, that inexperience makes it difficult to handle either effectively, and that there are times and seasons when one of them may be out of place, there would be no great reason to quarrel with the advice. But it is the generalising habit which is so mischievous. The preacher grows up with inhibitions and is afraid to let himself go.

I am prepared to make a reasoned defence for sentiment and rhetoric in the interests of the common herd. I shall take them in order, but let me preface what I have to say by pointing out that every preacher, in so far as he is an artist, gives his own colour to a sermon. I do not understand the artist's technique, but I gather that he can mix his own colours, choose whether he paints in watercolours or oils, produce his effects in ways peculiar to himself, and paint with a heavy or light brush. He can be severe or tender, lavish or reserved, rigid or sentimental as the mood takes him. The picture bears the impress of his personality and while there are canons of good taste which are recognised by every artist in relation to every work that he produces, he continues to paint in his own way, treating his subject with creative freedom. I would claim that freedom for the preacher. By all means let him learn the technique of his art, and let him not offend against the general canons of good taste, but he, too, must be permitted to mix his colours for himself, to paint with a light or heavy brush, and to deliver his message with a sense of creative

freedom. There is a place for Hogarth as well as Raphael, and for Franz Hals as well as Titian. There is room for Latimer and Savonarola as well as St. Bernard or Massillon.

Let me begin then with a few words about Sentiment. The English are incurably sentimental, and the preacher who means to reach their hearts must be sentimental too. This is a hard saying, and I would ask for patience till the daring advocate for sentiment has been fully heard. It may be that in the latter end he may not seem to be such a fearsome wild beast after all. But to begin with there is the sinister fact to be reckoned with—the English people are sentimental. Dick Sheppard, that most lovable person and prince of popular preachers, knows it and plays up to it with joyous abandonment. He is himself an incurable sentimentalist, which does not in the least mean that he is irrational or illogical or stupid. It only means that he likes to preach about what he feels intensely, and that he makes other people feel intensely about what he preaches. His thinking comes through to his audience in an emotional atmosphere. It is emotionally given and emotionally received. Why not? Many of the best things in life come to us in this way. The experience of love, the apprehension of beauty, the appreciation of goodness are all bound up with our emotional life. Sorrow and pain, hunger and poverty, disappointment and bereavement, all the common things that touch the common herd are matters of feeling. I grant that you can discuss the qualities of an isosceles triangle in an entirely unemotional atmosphere, but that is because there is no life blood in an isosceles triangle and no questions of human happiness or moral destiny are concerned. It is with humanity that the pulpit is concerned, and in spite of all appearances to the contrary the people in the pews are emotional beings. It is quite as important, in the general interests of their higher life, to stir the feelings in their hearts as to stimulate the grey matter in their brains.

The real difficulty with regard to Sentiment, as in other similar cases, is to distinguish between use and abuse. One summer I visited Blackpool to see the famous circus which performed twice daily at the Tower Theatre. With great difficulty I obtained a seat which I had to occupy for an hour and a half before the performance began. During the long wait the management arranged for our benefit Community Singing which was a revelation in the lengths to which sentiment or sentimentality can go. Sentimentality is sentiment out of place. That is a kinder definition than sentiment which is diseased. Certainly, the sentiment in which we wallowed, apparently with complete enjoyment for more than an hour, seemed curiously out of place. The most pathetic and heartrending ditties followed one another on the big scroll which was unrolled before the audience. Picture this perspiring audience, packed so tight that men took their coats off to keep cool, singing with emotional fervour in a minor key:

So tired of crying, so tired of sighing,
 So tired of being alone.
 So tired and weary, my skies are dreary,
 Why must you wander and roam?

OR

I laughed the day I saw you leave;
 I laughed and said I'd never grieve.
 But after my laughter came tears.
 I told my friends I didn't care;
 I laughed about the whole affair.
 But after my laughter came tears.

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My lips concealed a heart in pain;
 I made believe, but all in vain.
 For after my laughter came tears.

Psychologists may be able to explain the satisfaction to be got out of this emphasis on "a heart in pain" while waiting for the thrills of lions and tigers and the Wild West, but

this particular form of psychological preparation struck me as very odd. "After my tears came laughter." The sight of this great crowd heroically working itself into a state of "the blues" (nearly all the songs spoke about "the blues") was one of the funniest things that I have ever seen. The complete separation of sentiment from reason had been achieved. We had become irrational children receptive of any kind of thrill the management might provide for us. We were no longer thinking, but merely sentient human beings.

The abuse of sentiment is not without its counterpart in religious programmes. The religious management often stages something very similar. I can recall another crowded building—another similar crowd—another long wait for the meeting to begin at which all the thrills of spiritual healing were to take place. Just in the same way we were invited to take part in Community Singing, only in that case we sang religious ditties:

Give me oil in my lamp,
Give me oil in my lamp,
Give me oil in my lamp,
Lord Jesus.

or

My sins are all forgiven,
I'm on my way to heaven.
Glory to the Bleeding Lamb.

There was no attempt to provide a rational or intelligent background for the choruses, which might then have been lifted to the plane of a genuine religious experience. The crowd sang, becoming more emotional and less rational every moment. Thought meant less and feeling more. By the time the meeting began the rational faculty was almost entirely disarmed; the capacity to feel was at its height. No doubt the management, if it had been willing to argue the matter, would have defended itself on the ground that it mattered little what the people sang so long as the spirit

of expectancy was created. The critical faculty might hinder faith and to disarm it was legitimate. The attitude of receptiveness was essential to the programme about to be carried out, and the singing of these choruses brought the needed receptiveness to the surface.

But to the observer—not wholly submerged in sentiment—the dangers seemed very real. The successful carrying out of the programme might become more important than the successful interpretation of God. The temporary healing of the body, possibly by a quack remedy, might be effected at the expense of the genuine healing of the whole life. A mind religiously irrational and a body religiously healed do not seem to fit. God must be in my head and in my heart and in my understanding. No offer of healing which fits one part of us and deranges another can come from God. He is the God of our Salvation—the God of our whole salvation, mental, moral, physical and social. Not by excluding or depreciating any one of our faculties, but in the joyous integration of our whole being shall we find Him and experience His healing power.

But these particular examples of the abuse of sentiment need not discourage us in the use of sentiment. They warn us of the danger of separating feeling from the rational faculty, whereas the true use of sentiment is to make what is true attractive, and make what is false repulsive. Sentiment is not to be confused with gush. There are no more moral qualities about gush than about the clucking of hens or the quacking of ducks. Sentiment at its best is essentially moral. It clothes the skeleton of truth with beauty. It clothes the skeleton of a lie with ugliness. It makes good things fragrant and bad things stink. It makes us see and hear and taste and smell the difference between good and evil. It adds colour and warmth to what might otherwise be wan and cold. It calls out indignation and horror where evil is concerned, enthusiasm and devotion where righteousness is at stake.

It is from this point of view that I urge the free use of sentiment as part of the preacher's equipment. He must feel as well as know, and provided that knowledge keeps apace with feeling, the more intensely he feels the more likely he is to be an effective preacher. If the justification is sufficient, he is entitled even to be passionate and to be proud of it. In any case, subdued passion will be a constant element of his preaching because he loves righteousness and hates a lie. I wish I could banish from people's minds the idea that sentimental means sugary. It is a pity that the word should become identified with so poor and meagre a segment of its meaning. As long as they think of the sugary hymns, which are to be found in so many of our hymn-books, and identify the meaning with the debased sentiment which is often to be found in them, they will misunderstand my defence of sentiment. Properly understood sentiment is concerned with giving its right emotional value to truth, and all truth that touches human life and conduct has an emotional value of some kind which the preacher should apprehend and feel.

Let me illustrate the propriety of "sentimental" preaching from the New Testament. Our Lord's first sermon at Nazareth aroused the most intense feelings in his hearers. He produced an emotional reaction which threatened His life. Very few preachers do that now. The most intense feeling of His own responsibility as a preacher and of the responsibility of those who listen to Him is everywhere apparent. The close of the Sermon on the Mount, with its contrast between the house built on the rock and the house built on the sand as a warning to those who might hear His words without doing them, is the most powerful emotional close (all the more powerful because subdued) to any sermon in the world. He makes His appeal to heart quite as much as to the head, for with Him conversion is the main objective. "Except ye become converted and become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom

of Heaven." He desired that His teaching should not only be apprehended in the mind, but felt in the deepest recesses of the being. What hope, otherwise, of the movement of the will? Without some stirring of the inner life how can the new solvent appear? The aim of His preaching becomes clearer as time goes on. It is to secure obedience to a way of life. He is not content to preach a theory. He wants followers, disciples, citizens of the new Kingdom. How can this be achieved unless men are so stirred that they will detach themselves from all old allegiances and give themselves wholly to the new? "He that will come after me let him take up his cross and follow me." For this reason, because truth is so intimately related to life, so urgent, so insistent, so practical, so concrete, He does not hesitate to speak with passion. He pours His scorn upon the religious Pharisees who are the enemies of the truth. He welcomes the response to the truth when it comes from publicans and harlots. He does not hesitate to conceal His disappointment when the disciples misunderstand His teaching of the Truth. He is thrilled when Peter at last sees the truth and bears witness to His mission.

The tides of sentiment rise and fall in Jesus. There is ebb and flow. Hence His teaching is of that human kind that touches men's hearts, rousing them to anger and shame, repentance and resolve. He plays upon the human heart as upon the strings of a harp. Men fall in love with the beauty and tenderness of His appeal, and then, before they are aware of it, they are gripped by the call to action. Men stand silent and shamefaced before the sincerity of His thought, and then again, before they are aware of it, they are moved by the tenderness in His eyes and the love that must express itself in speech. The Jesus of the Gospel is no stranger to human feeling. A large part of His spiritual power lies in the intensity and variety of His emotions.

I think the preacher needs to be reminded of his right to speak with feeling and to create what must strictly be

described as an emotional atmosphere. Unfortunately, the words may suggest to many people irrational excitement, but I hope that I have made it clear that I mean nothing of the sort. Reason and sentiment must go together; I am pleading that they shall not be divorced. The truth is to be preached in such a way that the reaction of fear and shame and hope and courage, enthusiasm and love may be expected. The preacher's words must not fall inert and flat, with no ring, no challenge, no trumpet call, no pleading, no personal appeal. There is something more than a thesis to be proved, or a proposition to be demonstrated. There are souls to be saved, the souls of the "common herd" whose feelings are intimately bound up with the problem of their salvation. It is cruel to give these people dry sermons as if an emotional response were something to be feared. It is right and proper to make sermons homely and interesting, illustrative and persuasive directly with a view to securing such a response.

Our Lord gave no formal discourses on repentance and forgiveness, but He did give the story of the Prodigal Son. He did not analyse into their component parts class hatred or racial antagonism, but He gave us the story of the Good Samaritan. He understood the needs and limitations of the common people and met them gladly on their own ground. He did not despise their love of yarns or regard their feelings as vulgar. He did not say, as some superior people seem to say, "These people live too much upon their emotions, and I will, therefore, as far as religion is concerned, feed them with abstractions." His method, rather, was to centre their emotional life round some worthy object—some good cause—the Kingdom of God and its righteousness. He came not to destroy but to fulfil—not to repress an essential part of human personality, but to liberate it from unworthy association and to hallow it in the service of God.

Having already risked the loss of respect by a defence of sentiment in the pulpit, I shall now throw my cap over the hedge for good and all by putting in a plea for rhetoric. I shall begin to fortify my position by quoting a passage from Mr. Noyes' book entitled *Some Aspects of Modern Poetry*, in which he makes a similar defence on behalf of rhetoric in poetry:

"They forget that there is not only the false rhetoric of the second-rate politician or decadent poet, but also a true rhetoric which throughout the ages has formed part of the highest poetry; that the Greeks of Homer often spoke rhetorically, and that this is no more incompatible with poetry than that they also spoke grammatically. They forget that Rome lives in the rhetoric of the 'Aeneid'; that the best of the speeches in 'Paradise Lost' are rhetoric; and that a very large proportion of the great familiar passages in Shakespeare can be called rhetoric. Some of them—in *Henry V* for instance—are even (Oh, hideous intellectual crime!) 'patriotic rhetoric'; while in *Julius Cæsar* there is a blaze of rhetorical poetry that ought to make some of our fluttering and fastidious 'moderns' shrink like startled fawns. The greatest of his sonnets—like some of the greatest of Wordsworth—are rhetoric. Even in Shelley—and in Adonais—the spirit of poetry and the rhetorical form are often inseparable. 'The Ode to the West Wind,' from its opening apostrophe to its final rhetorical question, might be printed in a text-book on rhetoric as a classical example of the art of pleading. When men are in earnest about anything it is sometimes quite natural for them to plead; and in such a case it would be bad art to let them do anything else."

Mutatis mutandis, I would argue along the same lines with regard to preaching, only pointing out that "pleading" is even more definitely associated with preaching than poetry.

Numbers of poems would be spoilt by the intrusion of pleading, but the omission of pleading from preaching always calls for justification. The form and manner of the plea may vary with the subject matter and the congregation; it may be subtle or obvious, impassioned or restrained, but pleading is of the very essence of preaching. Its object may be to secure a verdict for a religious view of life, for the claims of Christ, or for the institutional life of the Church. Or, again, the preacher's pleading may concern itself with repentance, conversion, holiness, loyal obedience, loving devotion to our Lord, but preaching and pleading go together. Whoever heard of an unbiased preacher? It is a contradiction in terms. You can no more preach than you can play bowls without a bias, and if a man is ashamed of being a biased preacher I would recommend him to play some other game. Whatever changes come in the mode of presenting our message we shall still be quite incurably an order of pleaders. Our commission still runs: "We beseech you in Christ's name be ye reconciled to God."

It is this necessity of pleading which makes rhetoric, when it is spontaneous and sincere, a valuable asset. I think it is because oratory is so often dissociated in people's minds from character that it is looked upon with suspicion, but a study of Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory* would remove the prejudice. Dr. Alexander Whyte, the great Presbyterian preacher, was an ardent student of Quintilian and was never tired of expounding his "Institutes" to the young students of his own Church. "The Orator," he reminded them, "must be a man of noble character as well as of intellectual endowment. He must be trained in virtue even from infancy, and he must use the greatest diligence in the study of the best books." In a letter to a young ordinand, he writes:

"Do not despise delivery falling back upon matter. The matter is dead without delivery. 'Delivery, Delivery,' said Demosthenes to the aspirant. You able fellows are tempted to despise delivery as being 'popular.' I implore

you to rise above that delusion and do your very best by your message by delivering it in your best possible."

Dr. Whyte is here making a defence for nothing less than rhetoric, for let me remind you that Rhetoric is defined "as the theory and practice of eloquence, whether spoken or written, the whole art of using language so as to persuade others."

That is the point—the art of using language so as to persuade others. I suggest, quite unashamedly, that we must use language, not simply to express our meaning lucidly but to persuade. The jargon of our own day speaks of "getting it across." We must certainly "get it across." But we must do more than that. We must get it in. And all the preliminary steps to getting it in are important; arresting attention, selecting the emphasis, constructing, as it were, the melody which runs through the piece and which comes again and again through the sermon like a refrain. There are repetitions and pauses and natural gestures which add to the effect. There is all the difference in the world between effecting and affecting. Hatred of affectation is no excuse for ineffectiveness. We aim at effect, and if we produce no effect we are poor preachers. Hence the importance of the choice of words, the method of approach, the style and manner of treatment, the attempt to capture the whole personality through imagination and feeling and reason.

The preacher who means to be effective should be as variable as the weather in his attack on human personality. Sometimes he will radiate sunshine, and sometimes blow hard like the north wind. Sometimes he will thunder and lighten and sometimes his words will drop softly like the dew. Preachers who are all one climate burn up their congregation or send them shivering away. Even a single sermon should have varieties of climate. The sermon that is all sugary or all denunciatory or all sentimental or all an appeal to cold reason is a poor work of art.

It is quite monstrous that the idea of being eloquent should be a taboo. The difficulty is to avoid being eloquent if a man possessing any imagination or fluency of speech deals with a subject on which he feels deeply.

I would go further and say that in many cases deep feeling alone will produce the fluency of speech and natural eloquence which the subject demands. It often happens that the natural gifts are there unsuspected or deliberately unused because of the supposed prejudice against them in good society. It needs a shock to the system to release the patient from his paralysis and to unloose his tongue. Once he is set free, the new emotion, the earnestness of his belief, the intensity of his new experience will create its own eloquence. It may be first an eloquence of broken words (and there is great rhetorical power in broken words that vibrate with sincerity); but later, when thought and feeling have had time to affect the speech centres, his mode of expression will become more facile and the warmth and colour of his feeling will express itself in the warmth and colour of his words. It is very much a case of the soul transfiguring the body. If a man can acquire a preacher's soul he will find his very ordinary natural gifts transfigured. All the exercises that were ever invented for elocution and deportment will not make a preacher. It is no good making clean the outside of the cup unless the inside is filled with the good wine of a joyous experience and a living faith.

CHAPTER XVIII

A UNIFYING VIEW OF THE HOLY COMMUNION

“Bread of Thy Body give me for my fighting,
Give me to drink Thy Sacred Blood for wine.
While there are wrongs that need me for the righting,
While there is warfare splendid and divine.”

Studdert Kennedy.

I DESIRE to set forth a view of the Holy Communion which might not be impossible of general acceptance in the United Church of which I dream. I do not suggest that it is a complete view, but I believe that it restores a certain emphasis which has been lost sight of and makes it much more a human as well as a divine service than it is at present. The tendency has been for the service to become more and more remote from the life of the people. Many who ought to be enjoying it have abandoned all thought of making use of it either because of the increasing awe and mystery with which it is surrounded in certain Churches, or because of the flatness and dullness which makes it little more than a mark of membership in others.

My general theme is that the same spiritual laws operate throughout all the spiritual world, and that no grace different in kind from any other grace need be looked for in the Holy Communion service, except that in a very special and dramatic way we are made partakers of and associated with God's redeeming love revealed in Christ. I plead for a consideration of this view as a means of presenting the Holy Communion in a new and more adventurous light.

The highly specialised form of treatment which the service receives in some manuals of religion creates distaste and even nausea in the healthy-minded. It is represented so much as a thing apart, so different from prayer or Bible reading, or from fellowship with Christ through fellowship with one of His friends, so insistent in its demands, so lofty in its claim, so carefully to be approached, and yet so serious in its neglect that people get frightened or irritated or supercilious, and react accordingly. Numbers of young people are reacting in this way, and deliberately avoiding the Sacrament because intellectually and spiritually they reject the teaching given about it. Their teachers have lost their sense of proportion, and have forgotten that this Holy Sacrament at least was given to us "for our comfort."

The first thing to remember is that the service springs out of companionship with Christ. "Ye are they that have continued with Me in my temptations." It was to His friends who already knew Him, loved Him, trusted Him and yet had partly failed Him, that Jesus said in the hour of their sorest need: "This My Body—given for you." "The darker the hour, the greater the peril, the fiercer the storm—the more, My friends, you have need of Me; concentrate not less but more upon Me as I go the way of the Cross. Only thus can your experience deepen, only thus can you really know who I am and what I am, and what My friendship means. Such power and such love will flow from My broken Body and My Blood poured out that, in the strength of this new experience which you so greatly fear, you will triumph over the darkest hour, and in the might of My redeeming love establish upon earth the pillars of God's Kingdom."

Our whole experience of Christ—or, shall I say, of God in Christ?—lies behind this service. The service is meant to focus it, intensify it, apply it to our own needs and convert us—through our deepening experience of what Christ

crucified means—to share in God's redeeming purpose for the world. The service may weave as upon a loom the pattern of our devotion, but it cannot supply the threads out of which the pattern is woven. Christ gives meaning to the service, not the service to Christ.

It would be a great relief to many people who are really perplexed about the exorbitant claims made for the Holy Communion on the one hand, and its failure to convey any particular blessing to them on the other hand, to be told quite plainly that what they need is to know more of Christ and of His saving power, and that they must find Christ before they find the key that unlocks the service.

It is misleading to offer the Mass to a seeking soul as an equivalent to Jesus. It is folly to urge repeated attendance at the Holy Communion for the purpose of getting more out of the service. The distressed person must open his life, not at one point only, but at every point to the gracious influence of Jesus. In other words, he must find Christ, and he can find Him in a thousand ways, not necessarily sacramental. It is when he has recovered his general health, when the sheer wonder of God's love in Christ has broken through into his soul, when he understands what it means to be forgiven and to be trusted; to try and, even if he fail, to still go on trying; when he has gained, or is regaining, his sense of companionship with the redeeming Christ—it is then that the service will reveal to him its spiritual beauty and its cleansing power. Then he will come back to it—and find in the broken bread and the wine outpoured the precious symbols of the way of sacrifice along which he has begun to travel with the living Christ.

So many of our so-called difficulties about the service would disappear if we could only bear in mind that the purpose of the service is to concentrate our thought and feeling and will on Christ, in order that in union with His self-sacrificing love we may bring salvation to the world.

Picture again the company of the disciples at the Last Supper. Christ is nearing the end. The Divine Gambler is about to make His last throw. He has failed so far, but He is not bankrupt yet. There is still the way of the Cross. Perhaps that will storm the hearts of men. Perhaps that will mirror transparently and immutably the activity of God's love, and bring the world into fellowship with Him. He calls His friends to pledge themselves to the great adventure. Take, eat this—My Body given. Drink this—My Blood outpoured.

The whole service is instinct with forward-looking purpose, but how imperfectly is this expressed in our Catechism, when, in answer to the question: "What are the benefits which we receive in the Lord's Supper?" we are taught to reply: "The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ as our bodies are by the bread and wine." There ought at least to be another question: "For what purpose are we thus strengthened by the Body and Blood of Christ?" To which the answer could only be: "That we may unite ourselves with Christ's self-sacrificing love to help Him in bringing the world into fellowship with God." Such a question and answer would illuminate the whole service and make clear instantly its dynamic purpose.

Think how insensibly those, who like myself claim to be Evangelicals and who profess a special attachment to the Gospel of redemption, have fallen into the general slough. We teach our Confirmation candidates that Confirmation is a gateway to the Holy Communion, and, too often, leave it at that. At once we create the impression that the service is an end in itself, and to be regular communicants is the chief outward mark of a religious life. The mind revolves round the problem of eating and drinking, and concentrates upon the thought of spiritual nourishment. It is only a sick man or an epicure who gives much thought to his eating and drinking. The ordinary man never regards it as

an end in itself, but relates it subconsciously to the activities of his life.

So, too, when our Lord spoke of eating and drinking, it was in relation to the activities of the Christian life—the glorious activity of setting up the Kingdom, and bringing men into fellowship with God. I cannot think of Him being in the least interested in the metaphysical discussions of the Farnham Conference on Reservation. I cannot think of Him being satisfied with us if we treat our young people like sheep and send them to browse aimlessly on the Holy Communion, content, because we have shepherded them safely through the gateway of Confirmation or class meeting into the pleasant pastures beyond. He is concerned with bigger things—the end for which the Sacrament was given—the gathering round Him of an army—the constant renewal of the companionship of the Cross—the constant equipment of the armies of God.

This dynamic view of the service reduces to comparative insignificance the tedious discussion about the mode of the Real Presence. There never was a phrase more misleading or more mischievous than that of the "Real Presence." The one thing indeed on which we were all thoroughly agreed at the Farnham Conference was that the phrase was unsatisfactory as it stood. Presence we know, and absence we know, but what is this? We might indeed say, with some meaning, of an ordinary person, that he was present in spirit but not in body, or that he was present in body but absent in mind; but what conceivable kind of meaning can this sort of phraseology bear in reference to the ever-living, ever-present, ever-loving Christ? Of course He is present with us, but the discussions as to whether He is with us in His human body or His glorified body, or in a body which is neither one nor the other lead us into a realm of thought which at its best is sub-Christian, and at its worst is purely pagan.

What can we say of our Lord's Body, but that it is the

organ of His spiritual activities? The "How" of His Presence concerns us but little. It is the "Wherefore" that matters. He comes, as He always comes, to the waiting soul, or "Where two or three are gathered together." He comes both with mystery and with power, no more, no less than at other times. No moment betrays the secret of His coming, no mechanism can announce it. He comes, but *wherefore* does He come?

Whole libraries have been written on "how" He comes. The crudest, the most fantastic, and the dullest explanations have been written. Men have thought and argued so long and in so narrow a circle that they do not know when they become ridiculous, or how grievously they repel those who have one spark of poetry in their being.

We need to correct our emphasis. Not "how," but *wherefore* does He come? What is the purpose for which He brings the influence of His Personality to bear upon ours? Why does He seek to fill us with the radiance and power of His own divine life? Why does He communicate to us His own spiritual activity? Again the answer comes in terms of the battle to be fought, the work to be done, the Kingdom to be set up. As Christ passes out from the Last Supper to engage in action, so must we. We lose His Presence (No, we never had it!) if we go out to shirk our Calvaries, to forsake Him in the hour of trial and to hide in the day of battle.

There is a picture in the 110th Psalm of the Warrior King—the Messiah of the Poet's dream—gathering round him his army of volunteers; their armour is described as glistening in the morning dews. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy Power." Together they march out, and, presently, in the dust of conflict, we find them halting by some brook to drink and assuage their thirst before they resume once more their onward march. "He shall drink of the brook in the way, and therefore shall he

lift up his head." Spiritualise the story, and there we have what the Holy Communion stands for—its purpose and intent. It is a "brook by the way," of which the armies of God can drink in the course of battle and immediately resume their fight. It is not an oasis by which the caravan of the Church may linger indefinitely; not a river by which the citizens of the Kingdom may dwell in peace and cultivate the soil. These latter metaphors and pictures will not suit the desperate circumstances of the Last Supper, issuing in the march to Calvary and the triumph of the Resurrection. The Holy Communion must always be a brook by the way for those who have caught the active—moving—marching spirit of Jesus.

Granted that this dynamic conception of the service is kept in view—its immediate reference to the needs of an army on the march—we can recover fresh joy and inspiration in the service. It is no medicine of immortality—not a means of preserving our poor perishing lives, or keeping us perilously poised in a state of grace. It is a gracious gift, a draught of the deep, self-sacrificing love of Christ to those whose lives are already "hid with Christ in God"—who are already united to Christ by a living faith, and who draw their inspiration from Him in a thousand ways. The Holy Communion does increase our sense of solidarity and does make us more conscious of our membership of the Christian Church. It does help to hold us together. It is a supreme act of fellowship. It may be a spontaneous Eucharist. But its essential meaning lies in drinking deep of the self-sacrificing love of Christ as we move on to action beneath His banner.

Here is our Catholic Evangelical doctrine of sacrifice by which we stand or fall. The whole service is instinct with movement and action in relation to the campaign in which we are engaged. In itself it is momentary and evanescent—"a brook by the way"—but the sacrificial love to which it bears witness, and to which it unites us is the source of all

our Christian work and service, the inspiration which keeps us steadfast to the end in view.

The more clearly we see that end, which is nothing less than the redemption of the world, and the more we realise our own weakness in pursuing it, the more passionately we shall seek to unite ourselves with the redemptive love of Christ. In so doing we shall find fellowship with our brethren, and many another blessing which we rightly associate with institutional religion at its best; but the compelling motive which draws us to the service is that it tells us in dramatic acts the story of redeeming Love, interprets to us its purpose and makes us partakers of its power.

I wish that all the thousands of young people who have grown tired of the service could be fired with a new desire to unite themselves through it to Christ's redeeming love. I wish they could see it in its beauty and effectiveness in relation to the great crusades to which God calls them. Modern youth has not lost one whit its capacity for gallant and high-hearted service. It is not permanently alienated by reason of any peculiar feature of the age in which it lives from the call to follow Jesus and to drink of His cup. It is not beyond recovery for the Church, if the Church would raise a battle cry and call young people to pledge themselves to some cause worthy of the Cross of Calvary. Why should we not have Companions of the Upper Room like Arthur's Knights of the Round Table. Let the cause be good enough—let the leader be heroic enough—let the Church itself be sufficiently in earnest and they will respond. Then our invitations to the Holy Communion will take on new meaning. The end in view will glorify the service and restore to it something of the imperishable beauty which gathers round the last meal which Christ shared with His disciples on the way to Calvary.

In this setting let us leave the Holy Communion. It is the setting which suits it, and perhaps the only setting

which properly belongs to it. Cowper is right. Calvary lies at the very heart of it.

“E’er since by faith I saw the stream,
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.”

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

“ Le fin du jour, c'est l'épreuve d'un tableau.”

Millet.

“ Behold! He lent me, as we went, the vision of the seer;
Behold! I saw the life of men, the life of God shine clear.
I saw the hidden Spirit's thrust; I saw the race fulfil
The spiral of its steep ascent predestined of the Will.
Yet not unled, but shepherded by One they may not see—
The One who walked with starry feet the Western Road by me! ”

Evelyn Underhill.

“ Everyone that was discontented ” came to David.

1 Sam. xxii. 2.

“ I am come to send fire upon the earth.”

S. Luke xii. 49.

I WISH some great painter like Rembrandt could put on canvas David's Camp in the Cave of Adullam. It would make an instant and dramatic appeal. In the background the vast columns and arched chambers of the “subterranean palace,” in the foreground, round the camp fire, the eager, passionate faces of the outlaws. It was a strange band that followed the Lord's Anointed—adventurers—agitators—dangerous people—people who had run away—people in debt—people wanted by the police. Every kind of motive, every kind of necessity had driven them to throw in their lot with the revolutionary movement. Poor material, you may say, with which to serve any cause, much less to save Israel or establish the Kingdom of God. And yet amongst them were to be found idealists who believed in the possibility

of a better order of Society; men who were taking their risks not for the sake of pillage or loot, but for the sake of a cause which they held dear—men who recognised in some dim way David as the political saviour of their nation. To them the disorderly encampment was a poor exchange for the homes they loved, the wandering life beneath the stars a tedium rather than a joy.

Yet there was no place for them at the moment but the Cave of Adullam. The hope of the nation was there. Rough talk, rude deeds, mixed company, long marches, could not keep them away. Neither peril nor nakedness, nor hunger nor drought could compel their absence. Within their hearts burned the fierce fire of a divine discontent, which united them to their discomfort with the motley crowd. With such a following David struck out into new paths to seek the goal of his desire. So has it always been in the world's history when men have struck out on an adventurous path. They have been followed by a mixed multitude held together by the common bond of discontent. It was not the comfortable people in comfortable positions who followed Zerubbabel back from Babylon to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Those who sailed in the *Mayflower* to seek liberty of conscience across the seas were men "bitter of soul." Garibaldi's army was an army of "immoderate" men. To such the leader makes his appeal:

" But if you are immoderate men,
Zealots of joy, the salt and sting
And savour of life upon you—then
We call you to our counselling.

And we will hew the holy boughs
To make us level rows of oars,
And we will set our shining prows
For strange and unadventured shores."

It was just such a throng that Jesus drew after Him. People in distress—people in revolt against the established order—

people with a wild and visionary hope. Jesus himself does not conceal the revolutionary element in His teaching: "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled?" True, the revolution that He thought of, unlike the revolution popular to-day, was one which involved the shedding of His own blood, not the blood of others. But for all that, His appeal was frankly to the discontented, and, as the result, there followed Him men whose motives were mixed, whose ambitions were partly selfish, whose conception of the Kingdom was largely unspiritual. Even after three years' contact with His purity of soul and beauty of character, the inner circle of His disciples could still ask the question: "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom of Israel?"

It is these people who have been largely in my mind, as I have written in this book, and I find my thoughts dyed in such colours as I close. What can the Church do for them, what can the Church offer them, how can the Church ever hope to make them of its company? Always outside the sound of these interminable discussions on Church order I seem to hear the sound of feet marching away from the Church. Sometimes I seem to perceive the figure of Christ marching with them, and I begin to wonder how He can both be with them and with us. Then I go back to my job ashamed of my own "witness" that has helped to send these spiritual hunger-marchers out on their quest without me.

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There is a passage in Donald Hankey's writings in which he describes "the business of the Church." It is to express the personality of Jesus.

"Through a body a personality makes itself heard and felt and understood, carries out schemes, and gets into

touch with other personalities so as to understand and be understood by them. So the business of the Church is to enable Jesus Christ to make Himself heard and felt and understood in the world, to carry out His work of giving to men the knowledge of God and so freeing them from the tyranny of false ambitions and passions and fears, to give Himself to men and to receive from men their love and obedience. If a man's body is inefficient he cannot make himself understood, or get into touch with other men. If he is blind and dumb and deaf and crippled and insane, his personality remains shut out of the world. So with Jesus Christ, unless His body, the Church, is healthy, He cannot make Himself understood by men, or get into touch with men at all."¹

I can never quite think that Jesus is unable to get "in touch" with men except through the Church. There is never a Cave of Adullam in which men meet to plan some enterprise dedicated to the cause of righteousness and truth in which He is not to be found amongst the company. There is never a heart that burns against social wrong into which He does not enter by His Spirit. I see Him marching at the head of many lost causes that have never known His name, and triumphing in the success of movements which His Church has opposed. But the argument is sound: "Unless the Church is healthy" the Church cannot manifest Christ, and unless the Church manifests Christ His full splendour will be lost to the world.

"Unless the Church is healthy. . . ." It is not healthy when it is obsessed with complexes about the past. Perhaps our Church consciousness needs to be "analysed" by the Spirit in order that we may get rid of our ecclesiastical repressions. It is not healthy when it is obsessed with itself in such a way that it cannot hear the evergrowing

¹ *The Lord of all Good Life*, Longmans & Co., p. 99.

murmur of discontent outside it. It is not healthy when it loses confidence in its own destiny and nervously fears to meet the demands of a new age.

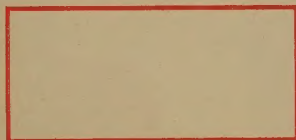
How much the splendour of Christ will be revealed when the Church finds its health no one as yet can fully tell, for it will need the new Catholicism to reveal it. Each Church may at present reveal some fragment of it; each individual may appropriate something of it in his own experience. I see Christ, for example, as the "Luminous Centre" in the universe, fulfilling in Himself the Psalmist's prayer: "O send out Thy light and Thy truth that they may lead me. Let them bring me to Thy holy hill and to Thy Tabernacle." I see Him as the Word made flesh transfiguring this life of ours in all its relationships to God and man with radiance, harmony and power. I see Him as the friend of publicans and sinners, so dangerously precipitate in His methods of redeeming love that the Church is apt to regard His methods as indiscreet. I see Him marching to Calvary bearing with each succeeding step a heavier burden of the world's sin. I see Him returning in triumph in the witness of the disciples on the day of Pentecost. I see Him in each succeeding age seeking to rekindle the witness of the Church.

One day, however, we shall see Him, or the generations that come after us will see Him, with a dazzling clearness that will antiquate our present imperfect glimpses of His glory. When the Christ—who even now transcends this poor institutional life of ours which we call the Church—has taken possession of the great tracts of human life and experience which are opening up before our modern world the real meaning of His religion will be revealed. Then no longer will the men who have natural affinities with His spirit go to seek their Cave of Adullam apart from those who believe in His name. No longer will the sound of marching feet—marching away from Churches which express Him so imperfectly—haunt the dreams of ministers of religion.

Christ will be known as the Lord of all good life through a Church renewed by the power of His spirit and taught by its bolder contacts with human need. Then will His splendour be fully come. His dominion over men's minds and hearts "shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth."

THE END

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